Evangelical Christendom.

MAY, 1888.

MONTHLY NOTES.

Again our issue is very considerably enlarged to enable us to furnish the readers of *Evangelical Christendom* with the remainder of the valuable addresses delivered at the recent meetings for Testimony on the Fundamental Truths of the Gospel. In nearly every case our reports have been revised by the speakers.

Our readers will already be aware that the Annual Conference of the Evangelical Alliance is to be held this year at Plymouth, from the 25th to the 27th of September. It is hoped that the early intimation will enable many members and friends of the Alliance to arrange to be present. This is the first occasion on which the Alliance has met in the South-west portion of England, and it is gratifying to find that the arrangements are being taken up with much spirit by the local Committee. The invitation was signed by a large number of Evangelical ministers and laymen of the Three Towns, and the Bishop of Exeter, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Alliance, has consented to preside at the opening meeting.

The recent meetings held in London for Testimony in regard to Fundamental Truth have drawn forth expressions of warm sympathy, not only as to their immediate object, but also as to their bearing upon the secondary, but by no means unimportant, subject of Christian union. We are now, happily, familiar with the sight of ministers and members of different denominations meeting together on such platforms as those of the Annual Conferences of the Alliance, the Mildmay Conference, the Bible Society, or the London City Mission; but it is not often that such genuine enthusiasm is evoked as has been the case at the late meetings, and that not only by the ability or popularity of any particular speaker, but by a deep heart-felt sympathy in the subjects which drew them together, and by a sense of community of interest in the maintenance of Fundamental Truth. Such truth is dearer to all true Christians than the secondary points upon which they differ. It is evident that the Evangelical Alliance has an important work before it in the future, in not only testifying as hitherto to the fact of Christian union in the midst of apparent discord, but also in practically promoting that union by rallying Christians round their standard, that standard of which David speaks when he says: "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" (Psa. lx. 4).

In rallying Christians to the maintenance and defence of Fundamental Truth, it is often thought that a spirit of controversy is engendered which is hostile to the law of love which our Lord has so enjoined upon His disciples. In this, however, as in all other matters relating to God's truth, Scripture must be our guide; and there we find that the beloved disciple who drank in—probably by intimate association with Him—more of his Master's spirit than any of the other disciples, and who may be called the Apostle of love, made truth no less than love his rallying cry: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth," or "the truth," as the Revised Version has it. He says of one: "Whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever;" and so serious a sin does it appear in his eyes for any one who "taketh the lead"—(2 John 9, R.V. *marg.*)—not to abide in the "doctrine of Christ"—that apparently concerning His person and work—that he does not hesitate to say: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

"See that ye fall not out by the way" is a word in season just now with regard to some differences of judgment amongst Christians that tend to separate those who have been hitherto united. It may not be out of keeping with the neutral character of the Evangelical Alliance as to denominationalism, nor with its claim on that account to act as a peacemaker amongst brethren, if a word is spoken in reference to two of these controversies which at present prevail. The first is that which threatens to divide the friends and supporters of the Church Missionary Society, owing to a strong feeling of disapproval, on the part of many, of their attendance as a society at St. Paul's shortly after the unveiling of the Romish reredos, not to speak of former occasions on which the Committee have not given satisfaction to the strong Protestant feelings of many of their supporters. We have already expressed regret that the society did not avail themselves of so excellent an opportunity as the recent occasion presented of protesting practically against the erection of idolatrous images in St. Paul's by refusing to sanction it with their presence. But though their protest was not what it might have been, yet we must not ignore the distinct protest they uttered in the resolution passed in reference to this matter. Moreover, the sermon preached on the occasion was most faithful and outspoken in the tone of its Protestantism, and, indeed, such a sermon as is seldom heard at St. Paul's. We would, therefore, venture to hope that the zeal of the dissatisfied will not outrun their discretion, so as by pressing the point too far to endanger the prosperity of so noble an instrument as is the Church Missionary Society for spreading the Gospel of Christ amongst the heathen. It should not be forgotten that while of the reredos at St. Paul's it may be too truly said, "An enemy hath done t'is," nothing would delight that enemy more than to see, as the result of his success, the further triumph of injuring a society which is one of his greatest opposing forces in the heathen world.

The other controversy is that touching Mr. Spurgeon's withdrawal from, and censure by, the Baptist Union. What is to be regretted here is the tendency of this controversy to assume a personal character, and so to allow personalities to obscure the real point at issue. We are, therefore, glad to see that Mr. Spurgeon, in the April number of the *Sword and Trowel*, disclaims any wish to make the censure he has received a matter of controversy. His words are: "The Baptist Union meets in full assembly on April 23rd, and the great question then before it will be, 'Is

this Union to have an Evangelical basis, or is it not?' We trust that no personal consideration will be allowed to divert the assembly from its great topic. The censure need not be taken into account; the object of it would rather be censured ten thousand times over than have his name and method of protest used as a red herring to be drawn across the scent." We welcome this avowal as simplifying the issue, as well as tending to peace, and we look with much hope to the result.

It has been objected to the use of a creed that "it enumerates certain things as essential, but it leaves out many more. But which of us has any right to accentuate certain truths as necessary to be believed, whilst we pass by others? Are not all truths binding on us alike?" This objection confounds two things which widely differ—the credibility of all truth as such, and the relative value and importance of some truths as compared with others. What is related in Scripture concerning Abraham or David, or any other servant of God, is true, and commands our belief as such; but who can for a moment suppose that such truth is as important as that concerning the person or work of the Son of God; or who would think of drawing up a statement of facts, however true, to be believed, concerning Peter or Paul, or John or James, and regard such truth as being of the same relative importance as truth concerning Jesus? Our Lord himself speaks of "the weightier matters of the law," and reproves the Pharisees for not seeing the greater relative importance of judgment, mercy, and faith, to tithes of mint, anise, and cummin. All were equally ordered, but all were not equally important. This seems fully to sanction our speaking of weightier matters of the Gospel, and treating truth concerning the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ as essential and fundamental, whilst that concerning baptism and ministry is surely not.

As this month is drawing towards its close many dark and threatening clouds are gathering as to the political future. The alarming condition of the new Emperor of Germany, the unfortunate domestic dispute as to the marriage of his daughter, the threatening attitude of Russia, the disturbances in Roumania, and, to crown all, the political ferment in France, with the possible sudden rise of a military dictatorship, all these combine to make the outlook for the future most disheartening. To the Christian it reads a lesson often needed, but never more than now, that the issues of peace and war are not in the hands of statesmen or rulers, but of Him who "doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest thou?"

Should it be God's will to allow the smouldering embers of war to break forth into a flame, there is every reason to fear that it will be a very terrible one. A combination of France and Russia against Germany, Austria, and probably Italy, would bring about such a war of giants as has been rarely seen, and would render it extremely difficult for our statesmen, however peacefully disposed, to keep England out of the melée. It would be well for Christians to make it a matter of prayer that He who can alone "order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men," would interpose and give us peace; but we can hardly dare to pray for this if not disposed to add, that we may also be given grace not to use such peace merely to further our own selfish ends and enjoyments, but to use the opportunity so afforded for carrying on His work in all lands, and seeking in every way to spread abroad the Gospel of the grace of God. Threatenings of war are often useful to remind us of what we so often suffer to slip by unused and unimproved—the untold blessings and opportunities of peace in relation to "the furtherance of the Gospel."

We regret to have to refer to an article which appeared in a recent issue of *L'Eglise Libre* in which the writer not only disputes a statement made by our French correspondent, but seems to speak of it as an "invention." We feel it necessary to say that our esteemed correspondent is an earnest Christian, who has been for nearly a quarter of a century supplying our readers with vivid descriptions of Christian activities in France. There must surely be a misunderstanding as to interpretation of facts rather than of the facts themselves. It would be a source of sincere sorrow to us if the organ of the Evangelical Alliance ever became the medium of circulating exaggerated or false statements.

OTHER RELIGIONS.

When I began investigating Hinduism and Boddhism, some well-meaning Christian friends expressed their surprise that I should waste my time by grubbing in the dirty gutters of heathendom. Well, after a little examination, I found many beautiful gems glittering there amid the surrounding darkness, and as I prosecuted my researches into these non-Christian systems, I began to foster a fancy that they had been unjustly treated. I began to observe and trace out curious coincidences and comparisons with our own Sacred Book of the East. I began, in short, to be a believer in what is called the Evolution and Growth of Religious Thought. "These imperfect systems," I said to myself, "are clearly steps in the development of man's religious instincts and aspirations. Nay, it is probable that they were all intended to lead up to the one true religion and that Christianity is, after all, merely the climax, the complement, the fulfilment of them all." Now, there is, unquestionably, a delightful fascination about such a theory, and, what is more, there are really elements of truth in it. But I am glad of this opportunity of stating publicly that I am persuaded I was misled by its attractiveness, and that its main idea is quite erroneous. The charm and danger of it, I think, lie in its apparent liberality, breadth of view, and toleration. Now, to express sympathy with this kind of liberty is sure to win applause among a certain class of thinkers. We must not forget, too, that our Bible tells us that God has not left Himself without witness, and that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. Yet I contend, notwithstanding, that a limp, flabby, jelly-fish kind of tolerance is utterly incompatible with the nerve, fibre, and backbone that ought to characterise a manly Christian. I maintain that a Christian's character ought to be exactly what the Christian's Bible intends it to be. Take that Sacred Book of ours; handle reverently the whole volume; search it through and through, from the first chapter to the last, and mark well the spirit that pervades the whole. You will find no limpness, no flabbiness about its utterances. Even sceptics who dispute its divinity are ready to admit that it is a thoroughly manly book. Vigour and manhood breathe in every page. It is downright and straightforward, bold and fearless, rigid and uncompromising. It tells you and me to be either hot or cold. If God be God, serve Him. If Baal be God, serve him. We cannot serve both. We cannot love both. Only one Name is given among men whereby we may be saved. No other name, no other Saviour, more suited to India, to Persia, to China, to Arabia, is ever mentioned—is ever hinted at. What! says the enthusiastic student of the science of religion, do you seriously mean to sweep away as so much worthless waste paper all these thirty stately volumes of Sacred Books of the East just published by the University of Oxford? No, not at all, nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we welcome these books. We ask every missionary to study their contents and thankfully lay hold of whatsoever things are true and of good report in them. But we warn him that there can be no greater mistake than to force these non-Christian Bibles into conformity with some scientific theory of development, and then point to the Christian's Holy Bible as the crowning product of religious evolution. So far from this, these non-Christian Bibles are all developments in the wrong direction. They all begin with some flashes of true light, and end in darkness. Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your

study table, but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself—all alone—and with a wide gap between. And now, with all deference to the able men I see around me, I crave permission to tell you why, or at least to give two reasons for venturing to contravene, in so plain-spoken a manner, the favourite philosophy of the day. Listen to me, ye youthful students of the so-called Sacred Books of the East; search them through and through, and tell me, do they affirm of Vyasa, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the Founder of Christianity,—that He, a sinless man, was made sin? Zoroaster and Confucius, and Buddha and Muhammad, one and all bade men strain every nerve to get rid of sin, or at least of the misery of sin, but do their sacred books say that they themselves were sinless men made sin? Understand me, I do not presume, as a layman, to interpret the apparently contradictory proposition put forth in our Bible that a sinless man was made sin. All I now contend for is that it stands alone; that it is not to be matched by the shade of a shadow of a similar declaration in any other book claiming to be the exponent of the doctrine of any other religion in the world. Once again, ye youthful students of the so-called Sacred Books of the East, search them through and through, and tell me, do they affirm of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the Founder of Christianity—that He, a dead and buried man, was made Life? "I am the Life." "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear." "He that hath the Son hath Life." Again, I say, I am not now presuming to interpret so marvellous a statement. All I contend for is that it is absolutely unique; and I defy you to produce the shade of the shadow of a similar declaration in any other sacred book of the world. And bear in mind that these two unparalleled declarations are indissolubly connected with the great central doctrines of our religion—the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Christ. Vyasa, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad, are all dead and buried; and their bones have crumbled into dust; their flesh is dissolved, their bodies are extinct. Even their followers admit this. Christianity alone commemorates the passing into the heavens of its divine Founder, not merely in the spirit, but in the body, and "with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature," to be the eternal source of life to His people. It requires some courage to appear intolerant in these days of flabby compromise, and milk-and-water concession, but I contend that the two unparalleled declarations quoted by me from our Holy Bible make a gulf between it and the so-called Sacred Books of the East which sever the one from the other utterly, and for ever; not a mere rift across which the Christian and the non-Christian may shake hands and interchange similar ideas in regard to essential truths, but a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought. Yes, a bridgeless chasm which no theory of Evolution can ever span. Go forth then, ye missionaries, in your Master's name; go forth, and fearlessly proclaim the plain, the unchangeable, the eternal facts of the Gospel—nay, I might almost say the stubborn, the unyielding, the inexorable facts of the Gospel. Dare to be downright with all the uncompromising courage of your own Bible, while with it your watchwords are love, joy, peace, reconciliation. Let it be made absolutely clear that Christianity cannot, must not, be watered down to suit the palate of either Hindu, Buddhist, or Muhammadan, and that whosoever wishes to pass from the false religion to the true can never hope to do so by the rickety planks of compromise, or by help of faltering hands held out by half-and-half Christians. He must leap the gulf in faith, and the living Christ will spread His everlasting arms beneath, and land him safely on the Eternal Rock.

SIR MONIER WILLIAMS.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

[From our own Correspondent.]

April 17, 1868.

It was odd, to say the least of it, and probably fatal to the object in view—viz., to bring effectively before the Parisians the glorious future advent of Christ—that an Englishman should, among divers predictions, select prominently an approaching triumph of France over Germany, basing it upon sacred prophecy. Familiar as this interpretation may be to circles of prophetic inquirers in England and America, it is doubtless the first time it ever fell pointedly upon Parisian ears. The scheme was well known to Napoleon III., together with the assertion that he was the personal Antichrist (!); and in our vicinity, shortly before the Franco-German war, in reply to one of the active members of the Evangelical Alliance, who courteously invited him to England, he said, alluding jocosely to the subject, "No, indeed; Englishmen over there call me *La Bête!*" (the "Apocalyptic Beast.")

The curious lecture in the Salle Kriegelstein may have flattered national hopes in some individuals, while it extorted a grim smile from others. The press does not need suggestive lectures to stir up strife. Alluding to noisy writers casting sparks of discord around and afar, a wise journal among the peace promoters seems to hit pretty nearly the mark as to the true state of things when it says: "Violent men and fools talk louder than the wise and pacific; a sprinkling of the former insure perforce a hearing, while the vast mass of the latter are made no account of. Noise goes for public opinion. Public opinion on both sides of the frontier is against war, dreads war, hates war; yet writers and speakers blow the war trumpet vigorously, as though the whole population of both countries were longing to fly to arms. The fact is, the system of peace armed to the teeth bids fair to be as ruinous to the public weal as war, ere war has begun. While French and Germans are absorbing their best strength, time, talent, and finance in preparing for a fatal duel, other nations are developing their industrial and commercial powers, and securing the markets." "Deadly permanent armaments are an anachronism," says, characteristically, a financial paper, "incompatible with modern economical necessities ever growing out of railways, steam power, telegraphing, electricity. Just as gunpowder and artillery have done away with shield and buckler, so steam and electricity will do away with rifles and cannon. Commercial intercourse, bringing men together, will be more potent than engines of war to separate them. The empire of the world belongs to those nations who shall understand and practice this."

A juvenile Society of Friends of Peace has lately been founded in Nîmes, advocating, like the Peace Society in Paris, an international tribunal of arbitration, with a special code of laws, disarmament and progressive suppression of permanent armies, and the creation of a national militia to insure peace within. Whatever view of prophetic Scripture is taken, "Give peace in our time, O Lord!" is the Christian's prayer, and his genuine desire and aim, and all such societies deserve encouragement.

The complaint reiterated in Protestant circles and expressed in religious papers is often a cause of surprise, revealing spiritual poverty where abundance is looked for. The various churches attract comparatively few worshippers, and yet there are 80,000 Protestants in Paris. Of course, the complaint falls upon regular Protestant churches rather than upon evangelistic halls, where the passers-by are attracted in by variety, frequent brisk hymn-singing, short sermons, and cordiality. We fancy if those who carp and criticise, under plea of sincere interest, and in order to stimulate energy, were to get filled with the Spirit of God and set themselves to work,

"Their cheerful song would rather be,
'See what the Lord hath done for me!'"

Were the power sought from on high, with wisdom to wield it, surely the nearly 100 churches, chapels, and halls in the Department of the Seine would overflow with radiating blessings upon the population. The statistics are as follows: Reformed Church, 13 places of worship, with a total of 17 services on each Lord's-day; Lutheran Church, 10 places of worship; Free Church, 4, with 6 services; Methodists, Baptists, and

other independent Churches, 7, with 9 services. To these should be added 25 popular meetings (20 of which belong to the Mehill Mission). In the environs there are 16 evangelical services. These figures do not complete the ever-extending Salvation Army, about to open a new hall in the centre; nor the 17 services in the English language, the 4 German services, and the 1 Swedish; nor do they comprise the Rationalistic, the Darbyite, the Brethren's, the Irvingite, and Swedenborgian services.

A large number of persons attended the opening of the new edifice for the Lutheran Church at Maison Blanche. Pastor President Kuhn spoke out on the important point that the Church is powerful in the measure of her faith. It is a carefully artistic built structure.

The Roman Catholic propaganda of "the faith" in foreign parts received 6,648,000 francs last year, of which 4,355,000 were from France. Since its foundation in Lyons in 1622 it has received, principally in minute sums, 220,000,000 francs.

Since the friars and nuns have been excluded from teaching in the public schools, the private Roman Catholic schools in Paris, which previously numbered 134, with 43,000 scholars, have multiplied into 193 schools, with 75,000 scholars. They cost 2,400,000 francs per annum, 400,000 of which are derived from the price of schooling, and 2,000,000 from charitable donations.

The vexed and important question of State pay for the Protestant Faculties of Theology has at length had what is generally regarded as a favourable issue. The Chamber of Deputies has voted in favour of the State subsidies, after a similar vote in the Senate. It seems that the suppression of the subsidies came in collision with the law which enacts that a pastor shall be a Bachelor in Theology of a State Faculty. If there are to be no State faculties, there can legally be no State pastors. The question is not, however, entirely closed. It is expected to come on again in another form. The Jewish faculties come under the same law.

The new Society in Paris for the Evangelization of Israel (whose population in France and Algeria is stated to be 130,000) has issued a circular showing the pressing necessity of the work by three considerations. First, the anti-Semitic feeling of the world against the Jews, pointing to a new period of persecution in their history; secondly, the movement towards Christianity of the Jews in Eastern Europe; thirdly, the formation also in various countries of free societies of students called Jewish Institutes, in which the Jewish question is studied under competent professors, with a missionary aim, praying for the conversion of Israel. Three chief means are mentioned: First, evangelization by books; special missionaries (two at least), one in Paris, the other in Algeria; two colporteurs, able to speak with Jews; and the co-operation of the pastors who live in the vicinity of Jewish centres. Second, the careful tending of proselytes. Third, the preparation of special missionaries. The society will publish its official news in the already-existing monthly, the *Réveil d'Israël*, edited by Pastor Gustave A. Krüger (Gambert par Orgères, Eure et Loire). This encouraging step forward is supported by pastors and Christian laymen of all the churches.

The Conference of the Free Evangelical Churches of the South-east met last month in Marseilles. It was opened by a sermon by Pastor Lortsch, of the Free Church of Nîmes. The reports of various churches were read, and the issue was the setting apart of a day for fasting and humiliation in the Free Church of Marseilles.

The second fraternal meeting at St. Fortunat (Ardèche) was held also in March, for Christians of all denominations, in the National Church. Two hundred, or more, belonging to various churches met in the one aim of joining together to praise God for having saved them by Jesus Christ, and to manifest their spiritual oneness in their common Saviour. The meeting lasted two hours; many fervent short prayers, vehement thanksgivings, bright hymns, short familiar speaking, all heartfelt, spontaneous, and fresh; perfect order, for the presence of the Lord was there; no human president, and no programme prepared beforehand. Great grace was upon them all, and the communion of saints was felt to be an intense reality. Our informant accompanied M. Saintou, after the meeting, through a short evangelistic tour in the Ardèche, the Drôme, and the Loire, visiting several places, and holding thirty-one meetings for mixed audiences—Protestants, Roman Catholics, Freethinkers. Everywhere were found numerous and intensely attentive hearers—souls thirsting for the saving truth.

In Pau, the evangelization of Spaniards is carried on with increased success; about 100 attend a Spanish service on Thursdays, and on Sundays 60 children attend Sunday-school.

GERMANY.

[From our own Correspondent.]

Berlin, April 16, 1888.

Ten day after my last letter the earthly remains of Emperor William were carried to their last resting-place—the Mausoleum of Charlottenburg, where Frederick William III. and Queen Louise are interred. Frederick William IV. had built the place for his parents, and the architectures of the monument, as well as the verses attached to it, speak of his piety and his great consideration for religious ideas. Emperor William often went to the tombs of his father and mother, and nobody was astonished that he chose this spot for his own last resting-place. The mausoleum is visited by all foreigners who come to Berlin, and its interest will now be increased. The municipal authorities of Berlin had done their utmost to show their respect to the beloved Sovereign; the whole large street, Unter der Linden, from the Cathedral to the Brandenburg gate, was decorated with black. Some Bible verses were also to be read. Over the gate were written the touching words, "Vale amex imperator." According to the last wish of the Emperor, the funeral service was held by Dr. Kögel, assisted by the three other Court Chaplains. The text of the address and all the portions of Scripture that were to be read (Ps. xc. 2, 3, 10, 12; John ii. 25, 26; Psalm xci. 14—16; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8), also the hymns to be sung, had been selected personally by the late Sovereign. It shows how well he was prepared to pass into eternity, and how he rested his foundation on Christ, his Saviour. On March 22, the day when he would have completed his ninety-first year, special services were held in all churches, and the sermons preached from Rev. xiv. 10. The attendance was everywhere very large. It is very pleasant to see how Emperor William's memory is honoured all over the world; even in countries more or less hostile to us the tribute of respect is not denied. In many foreign lands sovereigns and statesmen of other creeds attended the commemorative services in the Protestant churches. So in Russia, where the Protestants are generally so badly treated. Perhaps the most remarkable thing of this kind is that the whole Cabinet at Madrid went to the small Protestant chapel in the Calle Calatrava, where the agent of the German Mission, Mr. Fliedner, preached.

The present Emperor, Frederick III., was enthusiastically cheered on his arrival at Charlottenburg; but still more when, on Good Friday, the mild weather allowed him, for the first time, to drive to Berlin in an open carriage. The time allotted to his reign may be very short, but already, as Crown Prince, he was the beloved of the nation. I mentioned in previous letters how many prayers rose to the Throne of Grace for his recovery since November last. If Emperor William used on the eve of his death the memorable words, "I have no more time to be tired," his son and successor acts upon the principle, "I have no time to be ill." In the most conscientious way he undertook all the heavy duties of his responsible office. But already he finds he must economise his strength for the more important decisions appertaining to his position, and he has accordingly been compelled to depute a part of his minor duties to the Crown Prince. A special service is now held every Sunday morning in the chapel of the Castle of Charlottenburg.

In the first weeks of Emperor Frederick's reign a great national calamity has befallen our country. The masses of snow accumulated this winter have made many of the great rivers to overflow when the thaw began to melt them. Large districts have been put under water. The loss of private property is estimated to be beyond 20,000,000 of marks. The Government has asked a credit from the Chamber to give the necessary support to those whom the floods have driven from their homes. It created general pleasure and satisfaction in the suffering districts that the Empress Victoria made a tour there, to gather the necessary personal information and to bring the expression of sympathy from her husband, whose state of health does not permit him to come himself. Naturally, private charity does a great deal; and though we can only rejoice that in such national calamities much money is given, we wish there was also a little more readiness on the part of the people at large to give when spiritual wants are in question.

In religious matters, the Emperor has issued two orders which give general satisfaction among Christians. In the prayer for his Majesty in our Liturgy he has expressed the wish that the words "thy servant" should be introduced before the words, "the Emperor, our King and Governor." These two words were already introduced once before under the great King Frederick II., and afterwards dropped under his successor. Then the Emperor has ordered the preparations for the building of a new cathedral in

Berlin to be taken up immediately. This question is a very old one. The present cathedral is a very simple church, quite unworthy of that name, and not at all sufficiently large for the congregation and the numbers who come to hear the eloquent words of Dr. Kögel, Stöcker, and others. It was the Calvinist Church in Berlin at a time when the Royal House was attached to that creed, while the population was chiefly Lutheran. This difference no longer exists, since the union has been introduced in Prussia, but the church has from that time been utilised as a cathedral. The pious King Frederick William IV. had taken the question in hand, but the revolution in 1848 discouraged him. After the victories of 1866 Emperor William took it up again, and meant the new building to be a memorial of God's mercies to our nation. The plans for the new cathedral were published, but an agreement was not arrived at. The present Emperor has always shown great interest in church building, and he has now confirmed the general expectation that this would be one of his first acts. We hope, therefore, that ere long there will be near to our beautiful castle, and all its grand surroundings, a church worthy of the capital of one of the largest Protestant nations of the world.

The Budget for the new year (beginning April 1st) contains a somewhat larger sum for increasing the salary of the clergy. But this is all; the attitude of the Government against the claims of the Protestant Church was not very reassuring. It would be a great thing if our leading statesmen could be brought to understand somewhat more the importance of the Church in public life.

The Week of Prayer for the better observance of the Lord's-day was kept here in smaller circles. At three places meetings were held.

SWITZERLAND.

(By the Continental Agent of the London Council.)

Lausanne, April 13, 1888.

THE nineteenth century is undoubtedly remarkable for the progress of missions and for the awakening of a missionary spirit even in the smallest churches. We should remember that all the changes thus wrought have taken place within less than a century, and that, as Dr. Pierson, of Philadelphia, says in his most interesting work, "The Crisis of Missions," "not until 1892 will the first 100 years have rolled around since, in the humble cottage of the Widow Wallis, at Kettering, twelve Baptist ministers formed the pioneer English 'Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.' Attempting great things for God, and expecting great things from God, they laid on His altar £13 2s. 6d. as their first offering for missions, covenanting together to undertake to spread the Gospel among the heathen." "Most wonderful are the ways in which by keys of His own He has unlocked the gates of the nations."

The unity of the Spirit working in all the branches of the true Church of Christ, has thus also been manifested, and perhaps in a most remarkable manner in those which appeared most weak. It is of the missionary work of one of these, and of its remarkable fruits, that I would now give you a short account.

The Free Church of the Canton de Vaud, in Switzerland, was founded in 1848. It has been honoured in possessing such a man as Vinet. Numbering only 4,000 members and some thirty-nine churches, their annual collections amount to some 214,000 francs, out of which their pastors and evangelists, and their professors of theology, etc., are supported. Although many of its members actively supported missionary societies, especially those of Bâle, Paris, and of the Moravian Church, it was only in May 1869 that they directly and officially, as a church, began a mission to the heathen. Two young men, theological students of their own, MM. Ernest Creux and Paul Berthaud, addressed a letter to the General Assembly, meeting at Lausanne, in which they asked the Church "to undertake a mission to the heathen," and they offered themselves as missionaries. A commission was named to examine their request, and its deliberations led to the foundation of a Mission Committee connected with the Free Church of the Canton de Vaud. MM. Paul Berthaud and Creux went to Edinburgh and Paris to attend medical classes, and Monsieur Ernest Creux worked amongst the French prisoners in Germany till the end of 1871. It was then that the Paris Missionary Society begged these brethren to come to their help, and the Swiss Missionary Committee at once decided to go to the rescue of brethren in need, offering to lend their two workmen for work in the Lesouto till such time as they might then,

selves and them, and they would pay their salaries, and these administrators were to give them an account of the work they did. Before Missionary Rolland's arrival at the Lesuto, Monsieur Mabille had had some intercourse with a tribe living to the north-east of the Transvaal, the Bapédis. Youths of this tribe had been educated at the normal school at Morija, in Basuto-land. They begged that missionaries might be sent to them, and one of the new missionaries accompanied Monsieur Mabille on a voyage of exploration. Traversing the Orange Free State, in May 1872, they entered the Transvaal, passed through Pretoria, visited the Berlin Mission at Botsabelo, and on July 12, 1872, reached the Bapédis; but their Chief, Sekukin, refused to see them. Repulsed on that side, they re-entered the Transvaal, and at Marabestad took counsel with German friends, and set out for the Spelunken; after prospecting the land they returned to the Lesouto. There a conference was held; all agreed on the importance of starting this mission north of the Transvaal, and, as the Paris Committee could not take it up, the new mission was wholly passed over to the Missionary Committee of the Federal Conseil of the Canton de Vaud. But difficulties had arisen with the Government of the Transvaal. It would not allow the Paris Committee, or any French missionaries, to take up the work. Our Swiss brethren, however, decided to go forward, as this prohibition did not apply to them, and, in April 1875, MM. Creux and Berthoud left Morija and the Lesouto. The conduct of the authorities of the Transvaal was very peculiar. First, the missionaries were told that they were quite free to start their mission; their purchase of a farm was duly registered; then they were informed that they must apply to the Volksraad for permission to settle at Elipfontein. They did so; and behold, to their astonishment and sorrow, a unit refusal was sent them, purporting to be based on the Government's sole knowledge who they were; so they had received a written authorization from the acting President, M. Joubert, they were not a little astonished. They were arrested, and taken off to Marabestad. It was with difficulty, however, that the magistrate got a man to act as interpreter, and a protest was signed in their favour by all the Europeans resident in the Spelunken. All for a time was in vain. The Government at last granted them permission to return to their station at Valdezia, but delayed giving them any written authorization to establish themselves there. This was in September, 1876. The choice of this station was a most providential one, not so much on account of the climate, which is trying, as of the surrounding population; nearly all of it, some 10,000, belongs to the great family of the Maywambas, or Batongá. It is believed that this tribe was driven to the north of the Transvaal by a handful of Zulus about the year 1830 or 1840, who devastated the land lying south-east of the Transvaal from the Drakensberg to the sea. The Boers were delighted to receive these fugitives; gentle and accustomed to a pastoral life as they were, they saw that they could utilise them as agricultural labourers. The Maywamba are quite distinct from the Bapédi or the Betchuanas, and belong to the Caffre family. They speak a language of their own. The missionaries have since discovered that the Maywamba tribe numbers some 2,000,000 more who live on the coast, especially north and south of Delagoa Bay. We shall see how gradually God led His servants through many a trial to wonderful success in their first stations, and then put it into the hearts of their converts to go and evangelize their heathen brethren on the coast.

NATIONAL SWEDISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

MISSION ON THE ABYSSINIAN FRONTIER.

As the eyes of the Christian world are now more than usually drawn to Mumowah and the neighbouring lands in East Africa, a brief sketch of the history of the Swedish Lutheran Mission, which is stationed there, and the future of which so greatly depends on the issue of the contest about to commence between the Italians and Abyssinia, may be acceptable to your readers, and enlist their prayers for these hard-tried and persevering servants of the Lord.

Not till late did Sweden take her place among the countries which participate in the glorious work of spreading the Gospel among the heathen. In 1836 the Swedish Missionary Society was founded, but confined itself to supporting the mission of the Lutheran Leipzig Society. In 1846 the Missionary Society of Lund was founded, and the following year Dr. Fjellstedt instituted the first Swedish missionary training school. The religious revival that, about 1840, began to

spread over Sweden, in 1856 led to the formation of the Evangelical National Society (Evangeliska Fosterlands Stiftelsen), which at first only carried on an inland mission by publishing tracts and religious books, and sending out colporteurs; but in 1861 resolved to extend its activity to foreign missions. In 1862 it founded a missionary training college of its own, and in 1865 sent out three missionaries to Kunama, north of Abyssinia, in the hope that the Galla tribes might be reached in time. But the climate proved very fatal (five missionaries died there of fever), at the same time that the country was constantly harassed by predatory incursions from the Abyssinians and Turks; and when two missionaries had been murdered, and the natives themselves rose up against those that were left, because they could not protect them from their rapacious neighbours, it was thought necessary to give up the station and retire to Massowah in February 1870. After the seven remaining missionaries had recruited their weakened strength in Northern Abyssinia, Mr. Lundahl and his wife returned to Massowah, and set up a school; and Mr. Leger and Hedenström settled at Eilet, a village on the borders of Abyssinia, the warm springs of which are much frequented by invalids, and where they established a kind of hospital, and preached to the people. In 1872 Mr. Lundahl had the joy of baptising at Massowah the first Galla youth, by the name of Onesimus; and Mr. Leger another named Toumanuel at Eilet. But when several Abyssinian priests who had come in contact with our missionaries had their eyes opened to the truth, and began to confess Christ, persecution began, and the converted natives were arrested and ill-treated. In 1875 war broke out between Egypt and Abyssinia, and the French Consul, Mr. Bardeyer—who had been a steady friend to our mission—fell at the head of an Egyptian troop. In the summer of 1876 Mr. Leger went to King John of Abyssinia in order to try to obtain from him a cooler climate residence for our missionaries. But a revolt broke out just then, and he was murdered by the chief of a band of robbers, and Eilet was burned down, and the station had to be given up. In the meantime two schools were carried on at Massowah—one for twenty-three native boys, and another for twenty girls; besides a school of twenty girls established at Geleb, in the Mensa district. At the request of some Galla merchants, four native converts were sent out in 1877 with a caravan through Abyssinia to the Gallas; and arrived in 1879 at Godjam, where they have set up a school, and try to spread the truth. When illness broke out in the schools at Massowah, and two of the children died, it was thought advisable to remove them during the hottest season to Geleb. In the meantime, two of the missionaries had undertaken a long and tedious journey (it lasted one year and a half) to King John to obtain permission to preach in Abyssinia, but after they had at length been admitted to an audience, he answered that he did not want two kinds of gospel in his country, and that he would himself provide for the instruction of his people. In the summer of 1879, the Abyssinians, under Ras Alula, came to Geleb and began to ill-treat the converted natives and burn their books. Mr. Hedenström then paid a visit to Ras Alula, who received him, surrounded by some hundred monks and priests, and 500 to 600 soldiers. The monks complained that, in consequence of the preaching of the European missionaries, all Hamasian believed that man is justified by faith, without the intercession of the Virgin Mary; and Ras Alula demanded that Hedenström should surrender all the natives who had apostatized from their old faith. Now, our missionaries thought it time to quit Geleb and Mensa; and in October, 1879, they broke up with thirty-three children, the natives plundering and destroying the station. And now our mission in East Africa was confined to the station which had been established at M'Kullo, three miles from Massowah, and which, with our missionaries, the school children, and the native converts settled around, numbered about 150 persons. "Never," wrote Mr. Lundahl, the oldest of our missionaries, "have the prospects of our mission been so dark. We are in about the same situation as the children of Israel, with the Red Sea before them and the Egyptians behind. But then, we may also comfort ourselves with Moses' exhortation to the Israelites, 'Fear ye not; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day.'" At Christmas a new spacious mission-house was completed at M'Kullo, on a site granted by General Gordon; and when Ras Alula withdrew his troops, Mr. Hedenström ventured to go back to Geleb and re-open the girls' school. But in June, 1880, orders came from Ras Alula to break up the school, and now Geleb was finally abandoned. The following autumn, Mr. Arrhenius, who had conceived a lively enthusiasm for the mission among the Gallas, joined the little band at

M'Kallo, with the view of preparing an expedition to their territory up the Nile; and in November, 1861, he, Mr. Pakham, and Geminrer, who had completed his education in Sweden, set out from Mazzawah, crossed the desert from Suakim to Berber on the Upper Nile, and went up the river as far as Tumaka on the frontier between Soudan and the Galla tribes. When they arrived there in January, 1862, the Governor of the town, a German, threw every obstacle in their way.

(*To be concluded.*)

PALESTINE.

JEWISH MISSION AT JAFFA.

In the providence of God, I find myself once again within Turkish territory. The Committee of the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews having decided to share in the work going on among the dispersed of Judah in the Holy Land (where the Jewish population has more than doubled within the last few years, and is constantly increasing), owing mainly to cruel, bitter persecutions, especially in Russia and Roumania, directed me to transfer my labours from Rome to the trodden-down patrimony of my sires, with head-quarters for the present at Jaffa, the maritime gate of Palestine. Jaffa illustrates Turkish apathy most forcibly. This "beautiful town," so picturesque from a distance, is internally one of the most miserable places I have ever seen, even in Morocco itself. Narrow, crooked, twisted, unpaved, uneven, filthy, break-neck-stairy streets, full of offal and of putrefying carcasses, with the inevitably-attendant stench, render it a fit habitation of plague or cholera as *permanence*. The marvel is that it is not so, which shows the high natural salubrity of the climate.

As in days of yore, when in Asia Minor, at the termination of the Crimean War, so now also my feeble pen, it seems, must call the attention of all friends of religious toleration, through *Evangelical Christendom*, to deeds of persecution, oppression, and injustice by Turkish authorities at a distance from the centre of government, where such deeds of misrule cannot take place without attracting the notice of the representatives of the Powers immediately and effectively. It is now six weeks or more since a colporteur of the Church Missionary Society was cast into prison by the Pasha of Jerusalem, under the flimsy pretext that he was selling immoral books! All the civilized world know that the charge must be utterly false, and yet the man is enduring the sufferings, humiliation, and cruel comforts of a Turkish gaol. Fortunately, he is known to be a staunch Christian, whom no amount of cruel treatment can shake from his attachment to Gospel truth. And it is not long since another colporteur was similarly imprisoned. As I write I learn from a reliable source that the Bishop of Jerusalem, whom I had the pleasure of welcoming back to my fatherland a few days ago, in company with the Revs. Longley Hall and Sykes, called on the Pasha of Jerusalem, and obtained a promise for the release of the colporteur for eight days—from Christmas to New Year's Day; but he was not released, and on calling again to remonstrate, the Bishop was told that the man had assuredly been let out of prison, though it was a fact that he still remained in durance vile!

The Rev. Longley Hall has a spacious book depôt, the joint property of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the Church Missionary Society, in a main thoroughfare, where Greeks and Jews meet to discuss the merits of the books, and of the divine message they convey to mankind. For some time past there had been a meeting every Monday afternoon, to which all comers were welcome, when short addresses were given by Mr. Hall and others. Suddenly and unexpectedly, the Caimakan, or Governor, of Jaffa made his appearance, accompanied by a number of policemen, and dispersed the meeting, under the pretext that it attracted tumultuous crowds in the street, though there had never been, nor was there anything of this kind at the time! In this act of violence the Caimakan has perpetrated a series of inexcusable blunders. (1) If he really thought there was any danger to the public peace, he should have invited Mr. Hall, through the British Consular Agent, to desist from holding the meetings; and this he did not. (2) In entering the hired property of a British subject without the knowledge and representation of his Consular Agent, he committed unjustifiable trespass and violated the Capitulations. (3) He has slighted Her Majesty's representative in Jaffa; and (4) he has done violence to the letter and spirit of the Hatti-Houmayoun, which guarantees religious tolerance to all the

Sultan's subjects. The Consular Agent admits fully the correctness of my views, and feels that his rightful authority in such a matter has been set at nought.

Mr. Hall has since been to Jerusalem and laid the case before Her Majesty's Consul, who has made strong representations to the Pasha about it. But what justice is to be expected from a Pasha who holds a subpœna in prison on the most flimsy accusation? I have expressed the opinion that all Christian labourers in Jaffa should meet together and indite a protest against the Caimakan's unwarrantable invasion of our common rights; such protest to be addressed to the Ambassador at Constantinople and the Foreign Office in London. Had I been in Mr. Hall's place at the time, I should have forbidden the Caimakan entering—invading, rather—the depôt, except under the pressure, or employment, of physical force. I am happy to add that Mr. Hall has had the fortitude of resuming the meetings, which continue to be held in complete peacefulness.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

From the United States Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.

National Perils and Opportunities; being the Proceedings of the Conference at Washington, Dec. 1887.

From Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.

The Divine Programme of the World's History. By Mr. and Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness.

A South Window. By the Rev. C. F. Pettigrew, D.D.

From Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier.

Princetoniana. By Charles & A. A. Hodge.

*** We are again compelled to hold over a number of interesting communications with reference to Spain, Russia, and the Loyalty Islands, as well as Missionary Notes, owing to the length of our report of the addresses given at the second series of Special Meetings on Fundamental Truth.

Evangelical Alliance.

ANNUAL CONVERSAZIONE, Tuesday, May 15.

As already announced, the Annual Conversazione will be held (D.V.) on Tuesday, May 15, at Regent's Park College, by the kind invitation of the Rev. Principal and Mrs. Angus. After a brief statement upon the subject, "The Evangelical Alliance and its Work," addresses will be given by the Rev. Professor Schaff, D.D. (of New York), Rev. Signor Turino (of Genoa), Rev. J. Jameson (of Madrid), Rev. J. Jones (of Maré, New Caledonia), and other foreign brethren.

Cards of invitation will be sent to members or friends of the Alliance on application to the Secretaries, 7 Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C.

SPECIAL MEETINGS FOR UNITED TESTIMONY ON THE FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL.

In our last issue we gave an account of the first week's meetings for testimony, and we now give the addresses delivered at the several meetings in the second week, viz., at the Mildmay Conference Hall and at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End. It is only necessary to add that, considering the inclement weather which prevailed, with one exception, on each day of the meetings, the attendance was good, and the spirit which pervaded the assemblies was fervent and devotional. On the second day, the friends at Mildmay, and many others from various parts of London, were cheered by bright weather, and a vast audience assembled to hear the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, who was announced to give the address. The great hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, and a large number were unable to gain admittance to the building. Among those present were seen scores of Church of England clergy and well-known ministers of the Gospel. The greatly-esteemed Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle spoke for an hour and a quarter with all his wonted power, and we are glad to be able to give below a report of the address, revised by himself.

The Council of the Alliance feel devoutly thankful to God for His blessing, which has evidently rested upon this whole series of meetings.

By arrangement with the proprietors of *Evangelical Christendom*, both the April and May issues have been considerably enlarged to enable full reports of the addresses to be supplied to our readers.

THE REVELATION OF GOD IN ITS RELATION TO CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

By the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.

(Address delivered at Mildmay Conference Hall on March 21.)

I feel great joy in looking into the faces of such an assembly as this. God grant that there may be a power in our testimony—our harmonious testimony, as I am sure it will be—to the statement that our experience supports the truth of the Gospel. While we at first believed the Bible because we received it as the Word of God, we now further believe it because it tallies with our experience. As in water face answers unto face, so does our experience tally with the Word of God. I think I speak for you all when I say that we receive the Bible as the Word of God, and, therefore, what we find in it we believe, not because of our judgment of it, or our experience of it, but because "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." This stands for us in the place of all arguments and all reasonings; God hath said it. Concerning the Bible we say,

"This is the Judge that ends the strife,
Where wit and reason fail."

We do not, of course, pretend to understand everything that is in the Book. Nor can we say that all its teachings are pleasant to us: there are some of them that make us shudder, and thrill us through and through. But we believe revealed truth because God hath said it; and it does not come into our minds to cavil or question, or to do otherwise than meekly receive whatever we find in Holy Scripture. I believe that true theology is simply the plain meaning of Scripture, the grammatical interpretation of the Word of God. What the Lord says, that we desire to believe. If we differ from God's Word, the Lord forgive us our differences; for our desire is, in all things, to say, "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," and there is to us an end of all strife.

I often feel greatly rejoiced because there are mysteries in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. When I cannot understand revealed truth, it seems to me as though God had set a chair for me to kneel down and worship. The mystery is intended to be an altar of devotion, and the more high and elevated the great revelation of God may be, and the more entirely it seems out of my reach, the more does it seem to be a secret shrine for the great God of truth, before whose veil we worship, bowing at His feet. If I could understand all the Bible, I could not so readily believe it to be of God; I should fear that it could not have come from God. Surely it must be man's book if a man can measure it with his foot, and with his plummet reach the bottom of it. It is all the more surely God's Book because, while it is simple, so far as its language goes, yet it does sometimes bewilder us because many of its solemn meanings are infinitely beyond our ken.

We begin, then, by saying that we accept evangelical doctrine because it is taught in Holy Scripture, and we receive Holy Scripture as the revelation of God. What I cannot comprehend is how the Church has got into such a condition that it tolerates ministers who decry the inspiration of God's Word. I am not going so much to blame the ministers as to blame the churches that endure them. If to-morrow in Constantinople there should stand up an imam or other teacher who should decry Mohammed and speak lightly of the Koran, they would fling him from his pulpit; such a traitor would not be endured an hour. They would say, "Get you gone;

[illegible] somewhere else; we cannot tolerate you as a teacher in Israel, when you deny the words of the Book and the Prophets." Surely, if we had the heart of Christians in us, and did really believe in our Bibles, we should rail, because of the cleverness of a man, listen to him while he is explaining away the very things on which the salvation of our souls depends. We are ashamed because we are hoodwinked. Our indignation would burn like coals of juniper, and it would be found impossible that anything at the central doctrines, and of the Word itself, should pass as Christian teachers and be supported as ministers of the Gospel.

I know that there are some who have a little sympathy in that direction, and feel a little uneasy in their false position, for when they are boldly faced in their attacks upon Scripture they say that they are not attacking it at all. They remind me of the Bostonian who put his head through the fence, intending to steal some fruit, and when the owner asked him where he was going, he nicely replied, "Back again!" and at once withdrew from his adventure. These men must be boldly confronted, and told that we are not going to have it so. If they do not believe the Word, they must say so, and go elsewhere and set up as preachers on their own account. If they are the avowed servants of Christ, they must glorify His name, and magnify the doctrine of His sacrifice and substitutionary atonement. Honest men and sincere believers cannot much longer put up with unbelievers in the garb of godly ministers.

It is one to believe truth as taught in the Bible, because it is taught there; this is to us instead of proof. Without going into detail as to this or that, it is for us, without proof, to accept all that is in God's Word. Afterwards, if it pleaseth God to give us proofs, we thank Him for the confirmation of our faith; but if God speaks, that is proof enough. If, indeed, He has spoken, "let God be true, and every man a liar." In these days God has been pleased to give us much confirmatory evidence of the truth of His Word. I will only allude to two forms of evidence that are often very useful.

One is the *historical evidence*. We find that the Old Testament Scriptures, even those parts of them which were not thought to be profitable reading for Christians, have turned out to be very useful indeed as corroborations of the correctness of Holy Scripture. I should not wonder if some of those lists of names in the Chronicles—those passages which appear to have no spiritual meaning, and to be simply a string of names—will be found, some day or other, to be most remarkable confirmations of biblical accuracy. But at this time, whether you go to Egypt, or Palestine, or Babylon, or Persia, or Nineveh, wherever you please to go, and stones are turned up that have any bearing at all upon the subject, they are always confirmatory of the historical and geographical statements of Holy Scripture. I am unable to remember any inscriptions that have been deciphered which have staggered the faith of those who receive the Bible as the Word of God. If at any time difficulties have been suggested, it has, after awhile, been proved that we have either misread the Scripture or misread the old stones. The two things did agree, as truth always agrees with itself.

There was a man in Scotland who had a piece of cloth stolen. The thief was found with the piece of cloth in his house. The maker and owner of the cloth swore to it. The judge at the trial said, "There are hundreds of such pieces of cloth made in this district; and you set into the grounds to dry; how can you swear to this piece of cloth as yours?" "Well," said the man, "I can swear to it by this. I have a certain number of tenter-hooks upon which I hang my cloth, and there are holes in this piece which are exactly at the same distance from one another as my tenter-hooks. There are two holes in a certain place and three holes in another, close together, and as the holes in the cloth exactly fit to those tenter-hooks, I can swear it is mine." So we also dare assert that this is none other than the Word of God, because we find that every historical statement given in the Book fits into the tenter-hook of historic fact as it is brought to light by ancient records or otherwise. This good evidence keeps on accumulating. The Palestine Exploration Fund, and every effort of that kind, deserves the generous help of Christian men. Let them dig into the earth's bowels, and let them bore through the earth, till they thread it like a bead upon a thread, they shall not find anything that will contradict the historical statements of God's Word, but much by which they shall be confirmed. Many of the doctrinal statements, too, are interwoven with the historic facts, and so are fastened as a nail in a sure place. For this we are very thankful.

There is another form of evidence that cannot be gone into too much—*the internal evidence*. To my mind, the majesty of the style of Scripture still remains one of the surest proofs of its divinity. Now and then you may read in albums pieces taken from the great poets and great writers, and with them a piece under which the compiler is foolish enough to put the name of Jesus, or Moses, or Paul. You have never any need to put the name of any writer to a fragment of Scripture. Nobody ever mistakes a human passage for sacred Scripture if he is familiar with the Word of God. No one will ever mistake an utterance of Scripture for a piece of secular writing; that is to say, if he be really qualified to judge, and is a thoughtful reader of God's Word. For whether it be that Moses is the writer, or Samuel, or David, or Amos, or Paul, there is a certain divine style and majesty of rhetoric that can never be imitated, and never certainly approached by any who have endeavoured to imitate it. I would like a genius who thinks he can do it to try and write another chapter of Isaiah. We have four gospels; let them try to write a fifth. Gentlemen of large imagination, and persons quite capable of writing every kind of fiction and imitating the style of all the poets, whether modern or ancient, let them try to give us some new incidents which can be fittingly interwoven into the life of Christ. Let them give us a new miracle if they can. I believe the invention of a new miracle would be as impossible as to work it; and to write a new gospel would be such a task as would puzzle all the wits of all the ages; they would never accomplish it. Let them try their hands at a new Psalm. Let them also tell us which passages of Scripture can be fairly left out. Of all the birds and beasts, fishes and insects that the Lord God has made we cannot spare one, and whenever man in his cruelty or folly has destroyed any one link in the natural creation, the greatest mischief has been sure to follow. It is exactly so with regard to the Scriptures. We cannot spare a single verse; if a single verse were gone, subsid-

ties might follow at which we are unable to guess. The Book is a whole, and every part is necessary to the whole. It is neither to be added to, nor can anything be properly taken from it. So let it stand. You and I have no desire either to add to it or to take from it. Precious Book! Book of God! Well hast thou been called "the God of Books;" for there is none like thee. Thou art no mere book, as other books are; thou risest as much above them all as Alps above mole-hills.

I have thus given you a bare hint that there are three lines of proof, but this afternoon my line of proof is the third—namely, the *evidence of experience*, to which you can all add your portion. You who have never been to Palestine, and never will go; you who do not know much about literary style, and may not, perhaps, be so familiar with the majestic manner of the Word of God as you might be,—you can at least follow me in this particular form of scriptural evidence. In Psalm xlviii. 8 you will find the words that will serve me for a motto to-day: "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God." No man is a good hearer, or has carried out his hearing to its full extent, until he has gone to see what he has heard. The Lord Jesus Christ said, amongst His earliest utterances, "Come and see." This is the Gospel challenge to you all—"Taste and see that the Lord is good." You are invited to apply to the Holy Scripture, to the Gospel itself, the practical test of your own experience. That is the subject of this afternoon's discourse. Oh, for the Holy Spirit's help therein!

Somebody inquires: "How can we see those things of which we have heard?" Well, we can see them, first, *if we examine for ourselves the facts laid down in Scripture, as to whether they are facts or not.* This one, for instance, that man is sinful. Is not this a fact? If you have ever seen yourself in the glass of God's law, you know that it is so; that human nature is depraved, that it is universally imperfect. Those who wrote God's Word had never been in the centre of Africa, but they wrote about human nature in Africa. Certainly no prophets had been in North America, among the Indians; yet they wrote concerning human nature as correctly in reference to the Red Indian as when they wrote concerning the Semitic races. They made no mistake when they wrote that human nature has so gone out of the way that there is none that doeth good; no, not one. Now the facts on this subject stated in the Word of God are true.

We are also told in Scripture that the grace of God can renew the fallen, can bring back those who have wandered, that it has turned the lion into a lamb, and the raven into a dove. Is not that a fact? Have we not seen it? Are not some of us proofs of it? Do we not live in the midst of these wonders, these miracles of transformation, which the Spirit of God is working through the Word? I would go on to say—take any of the statements that are set down in connexion with the Gospel system, and then open your own eyes candidly, and go and see whether these things be not so. Judge for yourselves. This is one method of test which is open to us all.

The next thing is: *That the precepts, and see what are the consequences of obeying them,* what are the consequences of obeying them. There is this precept: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." If you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, tell me, are you not saved? Are you not saved from sinning; saved from the fear, and curse, and guilt, and power, and dominion of sin? Is not that true? Again, Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Have you come to Him? Then have you, or have you not, found rest? Further, He adds, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your souls." You are by service to find another and further kind of rest. Have you taken His yoke upon you? Have you become His disciple, and do you learn of Him? If so, do you not find a higher and deeper rest than that which He gave you at first?

It is within your power, then, my brethren and sisters, by obedience to the precept, to see whether or not the promise appended to it be true. Here is one that I have often found to be true, and I suppose you have done the same: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." If I were now to say, "Let those who have proved the truth of that promise stand up," I believe there would be many seats emptied at once. My trouble may have taken one shape, and yours, my brother, may have taken another, while yours, my sister, is of quite a different sort; but we have all alike called upon God in our days of trouble, and He has with equal certainty delivered us all, and we have glorified Him. I might thus go on through all the Gospel precepts, and I am sure I should find you asserting of each one, "It is even so; as God said, so has God done." His work runs parallel with His Word.

Here I venture personally to bear witness that it is a blessed thing to hang upon the bare arm of God. I do not know that I ever realised this so fully as I did a few months ago, when I seemed not to have a solitary friend left to sympathise with me. Then I learned to hang upon God alone, and though I have a great many kind arms I could hang upon now, I do not intend to do so, for I have found that it is very much sweeter to hang upon God's arm alone; I shall henceforth, I trust, be prevented from, in any measure, depending upon the arm of flesh. God with friends—that is very sweet; God without a friend is the sweetest of all. And if you venture upon Him in every way, you shall find it true. "Blessed is he that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of waters." You know the rest, you who have tried it. If you have ever done business on great waters, you have proved the truth of great promises. If you have been up to your necks in great troubles, or have been brought into vehement burning flames, you have had great deliverances. You can speak well to-day of that blessed name which never faileth. Let heaven and earth pass away, but not one jot or tittle of God's covenant Word shall ever fall to the ground. Here again we have the test of experience by which to prove God's Word.

But there is a higher way still, if possible, of proving God's Word to ourselves. "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life." You have believed in Him; we will take that for granted. Then you *have everlasting life*. Tell me, is it not so? You are at this moment living in a way you never lived before. You have received a new form of life altogether. Changed is everything, because

you are changed. A young girl was being questioned about her conversion, and she said, "Either the world is quite altered, or else I am; it is one of the two." So the world vanishes the same, doubtless the alteration was in her. Now, we are like the young man whose eyes were opened by Elisha's prayer; we see hosts of fire, and chariots of fire, that were invisible to us before. Now, strange to say, the things we do not see with our eyes we see with our souls, so that they appear to be the only real things; and the things that we see with our eyes have now come to be regarded as shadows. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." There has been born in us a new, holy, and superior sense, so that the lower senses of the optic and auditory nerves have now become only the channels of communication with a shadowy world. Our new life has new senses that hold intercourse with the real world—the world which endureth and abideth, when, as a moment's foam dissolves in the wave and is lost for ever, all the things that are made shall utterly disappear. Are you cognizant of this new life? You cannot tell another what it is, but you do know that at this moment you have a life within you just as much superior to your former life as that is superior to the life of a dog. As an ordinary man is far above the beast, so the renewed, regenerated man is yet further above the ordinary man. He sees what another sees not, what another hears not; discerns spiritual things, which can only be spiritually discerned, for God has given to him to be partaker of His Holy Spirit.

When we once get into this experience we have evidence enough, for it teems around us. Of course, it is not good evidence to the unbeliever, because he will not accept our evidence. He puts against it this statement, that he does not see it. This is no better refutation than the evidence of the Irishman, when, convicted of theft by three witnesses, he said, "Please, your honour, I can bring thirty witnesses who can prove that they did not see me steal it." All the evidence of the unspiritual man is of that kind; he says, "I do not see it." That exactly confirms what we have said when we have quoted the Scripture. The carnal man cannot see it; he has not the capacity and faculty with which to see it. We have said, "Ye must be born again." So that we prove the truth of the Word by the witness of the very men who thought to disprove our assertion.

But why are we not to be believed when we bear witness upon spiritual realities? A lawyer in the United States, a disbeliever, found himself one evening advanced to a Methodist class meeting; it was pure curiosity that brought him there. He looked round and saw his neighbours, small farmers and shopkeepers, all persons of excellent repute. One rose up and stated the circumstances of his conversion; then another and another. They stated certain facts, and they all dovetailed very much to agree the one with the other. As the lawyer sat there he began to think within himself, "Now, if I had a case to prove in court, I should not wish for a better lot of witnesses than these men round about me. If they all swore to a thing I feel that I should carry the judge and jury with me to a certainty. If I would believe these men in such a case, ought I not to believe them when they are stating what they evidently most earnestly believe to be true, and where their very best character is developed in the worship of their God? I ought assuredly to believe them now." He was convinced by their testimony, and I think it was just and right that he should be so.

If we were to try to prove to a brute animal in the stable the beauties of poetry, we should not expect to succeed. Neither do we expect to succeed when we try to prove our faith to an unspiritual man. The horse has no book of poetic beauty, and the unbeliever does not possess any spiritual faculty till that, the Holy Ghost, has renewed him, and he is born again. The fact that men do not accept our witness does not at all astonish us, for when the Lord of glory Himself bare witness to these things His testimony was not accepted. "He came unto His own, but His own received Him not."

Having once become possessor of spiritual life, we get abundant opportunities of testing the faithfulness of God. Every promise in God's Word becomes an opportunity of discovering the power, the immutability, the love, the faithfulness, and the goodness of God. But let us be very thankful when we are enabled to verify the promise by experience. You who always prosper, and enjoy good health, be thankful for it, and for all the little round of pleasures that will fall to your lot; you who are suffering persons, and are often sick, and go frequently to the grave, you who are slandered, or whose lives are a daily battle, thank God still more for that enlarged range of promise which you can now test and try. You cannot see the stars now, but if you were to go down to the bottom of a well at high noon you would see the stars. God sometimes takes us down into the deeps of affliction that we may see His promises. Many of the promises are written in sympathetic ink—a kind of ink that seems to leave no mark on the paper till you hold it to the fire; then the black lines stand out. Much of God's Word must be held to the fire of fierce and trying affliction, and then you say to yourself, "I now understand the words, and I see that the Lord is good." You must be cast upon a certain island ere you can shake off the beast into the fire; or you must be banished to another certain island ere you can be in the Spirit on the Lord's-day, and hear behind you the voice of the trumpet, and see the majestic figure at whose feet you shall fall as dead. I say, be thankful for trials when they come. Say to yourself, as the rumbling wheels of trial come up to the door, "Here comes another waggon-load of heavenly gold; let me have the grace to receive it, and not to lose a particle of it." No trial should pass over us without our getting from it fresh proof of the faithfulness of God, and learning that as our day so shall our strength be.

I hope I do not altogether astonish you if I say that I am now getting to the beginning of my subject. I believe I shall not weary you, for I have found that there is nothing that people like to hear so much as what they know. If I am travelling over the same country as you have travelled in, you will recognize the various spots, and say to yourself, "Yes, I have been there; I can bear witness to the truthfulness of what is written in God's Word. If there be proofs, I have known them."

Let me go over some of the principal doctrines which are generally believed amongst us; the doctrine of this Evangelical Alliance, in which some

of us have been nurtured from our childhood. [Our dear friend, the Rev. D. R. Hankin, has told that he remembers me thirty-four years ago, or thereabouts, which is quite correct. There was a good woman who came to me begging the other day, and she said she heard me preach in Baggrigge Wells Road fifty years ago. I said to her, "Dear madam, are you not mistaken? was it not sixty?" She said she did not know, but it might be sixty. "Well," I replied, "as I am only fifty-four, I do not think I said much sixty years ago." But one thing I can say, and the chairman will confirm it: I preach to-day what I preached thirty-four years ago. I met a good brother from America twenty years before, and saluted him. I shook hands with him again, and he said to me, "I heard you preach twenty years ago, and you are on the same old lines still." I said, "Yes, and if you come back at the end of another twenty years, you will find me on the same lines." I cannot preach anything else but the Gospel, because I do not know anything else, and I do not intend to. I have come to the decision of Paul: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is a fine thing to have one blind eye, and the other a single eye, able to see nothing but the old truth. When I find something better I will give it to you, but not till then.

Now there is, first of all, the doctrine of the Scripture with regard to man, to which I have already alluded. We have tested it for ourselves. *I believe in the Fall.* I am quite sure I must have fallen some time or other, for I know I am not as good as God would have made me, and as I shall be one day. As I found myself in my natural state when the Spirit of God woke me up to examine myself, I did not find myself to be the perfect creation of God. I found myself a fallen being while I was yet a boy. With godly parents and a holy training, yet I had abundant evidence that at some time or other I had had an awful fall. Some people think that in the fall Adam broke his little finger; he met with much more serious mischief than that. There was an awful fall for the whole race in that day when our great representative wilfully broke the law of his God. The Scripture tells us that the human heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Perhaps you do not believe it; but I know it was true of me, and I believe it to be true of the rest of us. When a man once begins to see himself he begins to hate himself, and is ready to condemn himself outright. According to Scripture, there are tendencies in us towards evil; do you find no such tendencies in yourself? Do you have to try and force yourself to think a wrong thought? Do you ever have to sit down and try to think of something evil? Evil thoughts come quickly enough of themselves, like ill weeds that grow apace. But when you wish to do right, and to study great truths, and to bring yourself into an elevated frame of mind, is there not effort wanted, because of the old nature within which points downwards and towards evil, even as Scripture tells us?

Then do we not find ourselves, when really aroused by the Spirit of God, to be *impotent in everything that is good?* The Holy Spirit speaks of a time "when we were yet without strength." Did you not find yourself without strength? I hear the Gospel cry, "Believe and live,"—yet I verily feel I could as well make a world as believe; it is beyond the strength of my dead nature. There must be the power from God even for repentance and faith. I think I might appeal to every person here who has passed from death to life. Remember your natural condition, and you will agree that the Scripture does not say a word that is too severe about you. Does it not truly describe the awful disease that raged within you, and the consequent death that came upon you, and the corruption that follows? Oh, dear friends, when Scripture speaks to us about the two natures striving within—the other law in our members warring against the law of our mind—do you not find it so? I do not think anybody could have ever dreamed that seventh chapter of Romans. There are many who do not understand it, but it is a true description of the experience of God's people. Yes, we can say that the Word of God in its teaching about the fallen estate of man has been verified in our experience.

Go a little further. Holy Scripture speaks of the nature of sin. It never treats it lightly. It is a matter of great and solemn demerit. You hear modern thinkers talk about human infirmities and frailties; Scripture never talks so. Sin in God's book is an exceeding great and bitter evil. Let me ask you who have been convinced by the Spirit of God if that is not how you think of sin. When the light came and streamed into your soul, did sin seem a trifle to you? Did it not seem a thing horrible, and above measure detestable and loathsome?

As to the punishment of sin, we may think what we please about it, but there is a certain something within a man's breast that bears witness to the truth of the most terrible declarations of God's Word with regard to the punishment of sin. That which troubled me most when I awakened to a sense of sin was this: How can God forgive me? I said: If God does not punish me, He ought to do so. And the difficulty with me was, how can this world stand if I go unpunished? How can God sit on the throne and judge righteously if He passes over such sin as mine? To speak briefly, I damned myself, I condemned myself as solemnly, in the court of my conscience, as God himself can do from His great white throne at the last day. I no thought of sin that the most burning words of the most fierce of the prophets could not have been more intense than those which I pronounced against myself, while I stood under the guilt and curse of sin.

Then, indeed, I felt that the sin in me would not be cured by any degree of suffering. The theory is that a certain amount of suffering in a future state can kill sin out of man's heart. Did you ever see sin killed in you by suffering? I never did. The supposed purifying effect of suffering is totally unknown to my moral consciousness. If sin brings evil upon me, it brings also another evil—a desperate weakening of the will against it. The heart of man is like the heart of Pharaoh. God may seem to empty the quiver of His plagues upon a man, and yet he is more hardened than ever against God.

"Law and terrors do but harden,
All the while they work alone,
'Tis a sense of blood-bought pardon
That dissolves the heart of stone."

All that is taught in Scripture with regard to sin we find confirmed by our own experience of it,

and I shall stay to move on this point, leaving you to testify for yourselves.

Let us present another step. The grandest doctrine of the Word of God, to my mind, is *the doctrine of the atoning sacrifice of Christ*. I will contend for every letter of truth; but if I must give up something, I will hold tenaciously to this: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I confess to a great horror when I have heard men call this the doctrine of the shambles. O God, be merciful to them, the chief of sinners, and convert them by Thy love. As to this doctrine of sacrifice, to put it plainly, this truth of substitution, Christ Jesus was made sin for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. When God the Holy Ghost led you to receive this fact, did it not satisfy the intense craving of your spirit? Did you ever know what perfect rest about sin was till you saw it laid upon Christ, carried away by Christ up to the tree, borne by Him upon the tree, and there made an end of by the shedding of His precious blood? Would anything short of that, do you think, content you now? I am sure it would not. There is a thirst in the human heart that nothing can ever satisfy, but "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Yonder is a deep abyss that nothing can fill till the Son of God leaps into it; and then it is filled indeed.

Let me ask you, further, as to this doctrine of substitution and atonement. How does it act upon your mind with regard to practical matters of life? Did you ever conquer a sin except by the blood of Christ? Did you ever slay a sin until you took the nails that fastened the Saviour to the cross, and nailed the sin up with them? Did you ever pierce its heart, except with the lance that set His heart abroach upon the bloody tree? You know that the cross is the death of sin; by it sin is crucified. There is a moral power, a divine spiritual principle, in the Cross that helps us to overcome evil of every sort.

What is there that is not in the Cross? I do but touch it as a swallow touches the pool with his wing, and is gone. The crucifixion of Christ, the substitution of Christ—it is an infinite theme, yielding infinite blessings to the hearts that receive it; we know it is so. God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for by it the world is crucified to us and we to the world!

But let me give you a hint or two about some other things which have been proved by your experience and mine. They prove the doctrine of effectual calling. We were called a long while by our ministers; called by our mothers most tenderly; called by our Sunday-school teachers so persuasively. But we never came, till at last the Holy Spirit called us. Without the violation of our will, He mastered our will. Without injuring the most delicate fibre of our mental constitution, He ruled and governed us. He did not take us by the ears and drag us to the cross. More effectually than that, He wrought upon us, till, with full consent, we yielded to His divine sway, and came to Christ. I have heard a great deal about free will, and I am not going into any discussion about it, but I never heard a Christian doubting that his conversion was the work of the Spirit of God. We are all agreed about that. We do believe that the Lord called us, called us out from among men by the effectual working of His grace. Our experience coincides with that.

Then we believe in *regeneration*. Brethren and sisters, do we not know what it means? You do not know the day, perhaps, when you were regenerated; it is not necessary you should. A poor troubled woman said to me the other day she was afraid she had not been born again, because she could not tell the day of the great change. I asked her when her birthday was, and, curiously enough, she did not know *that*. She said she was born before the Registration Act, and she had no record of her birth. "Well, I am sorry to hear that," said I, "because it proves that you are not alive." But she knew she was alive. "Oh, yes, I know you are alive, because you are troubled that you do not know when you began to live. You would not be troubled about that if you were not alive." So sometimes the very troubles that people have about not knowing when they were converted prove that they are converted. I remember an old gentleman looking for his spectacles everywhere and ever so long, when he had got them on his nose all the time. Indeed, he could not have looked for them without them, his sight was so far gone. So some persons are looking for their grace by their grace. The grace which has made them anxious is the very thing they are using when they are searching for a sense of grace. Do I not speak to many who, whether they know the day or not, do really know that they have been born again? "Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." You do not want any proof of the doctrine of regeneration, because you carry the proof in your own bosoms.

There is a great doctrine of Holy Scripture that we need to preach more and more—namely, our *union with the Lord Jesus Christ*. We are one with Him, as the stone with the foundation, as the branch with the vine, as the limb with the body, as the wife with the husband. Have you ever proved this? Have you ever felt that He sympathizes with you? Do you sympathize with Him? When He is grieved, are you grieved? Is the prosperity of Christ's cause your prosperity? If you see Christ wounded in one of His members, are you touched by it? Are you happy when you are dwelling in communion with Him, and unhappy when you find the slightest shadow coming across your heart to hide from you the face of the Well-beloved? Has it come to this: "It is no more I, but Christ that dwelleth in me"? Do you dwell in Him? You are, indeed, the most honoured and blessed of all God's creatures if you have learned that you are one with Jesus by an eternal union—one with Him in life and growth, one with Him in His death and in His resurrection, and one with Him in His glory.

If you have proved this, you have got past all doubt about Holy Scripture. To some of us it really seems ridiculous when people begin to try and prove those things, which are our meat and drink. "Prove that there is a sun!" says the fish; "where should I be if there were not?" "Prove that there is air!" says the bird; "how could I fly if there were not?" "Prove that there is a sun!" says the eye; "how could I see if there were no light?" Jesus lives in us, and

we live in Him, and we can prove the Gospel because we rejoice in Him with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

If time permitted, I might dwell upon the various works of the Spirit of God, which we have proved and experienced. I might also speak of the inward joys that are unfolded in Holy Scripture. We know some of them, and we are going on to know the rest. If we are rejoicing in God, and working righteousness, God will surprise us with new displays of His grace.

Let me touch for a moment upon another proof of the truth of God's Word and Gospel—*the power of prayer*. Now we have plunged into the deeps, have we not? I shall not give you any instances this afternoon, nor attempt to do so. If you have once learned truly to live the life of faith, you will not be many days without testing *the power of prayer*. Certainly you will never be a month without distinct evidence that God as surely hears prayer as that we, being evil, answer the requests of our children, and give good gifts to them that ask us. If there is any fact that is proved, it is that God hears prayer. If there is any scientific statement that is capable of proof as unanswerable as mathematical proof, it is this. It is not a dozen of us who have tried it, and can bear witness that we have found it true. It is not even a hundred of us; we solemnly avow, before the Eternal God, that thousands, yea, millions, of God's people have been in the habit of approaching the Throne of Grace, and asking of Him the things they need, and they have received those things at God's hands. When they have not received the exact thing they have asked for, they have been most grateful that God, in infinite mercy, has rather listened to the spirit of their prayer than to the letter of it. If He does not pay us in silver, He pays in gold. If we have not received the thing we thought was best, we have received what He knew was best. So He has proved that He still heareth prayer. This seems to me to be a grand line to work out, and one which any of us can as well deal with as the most learned doctor of divinity or the gentleman who is senior wrangler in his university.

I remember being told, as a lad, of a minister who lost a key, and prayed to God to find it. It was told to me as a very singular thing, and the person telling me was a Christian. He seemed to think the minister was irreverent in praying to God about such a trifling thing as a key. But is it not the case that the little things give us more trouble than the big things? Job could bear the loss of all his camels, but I wonder what he would have said to Mrs. Job if a button had been off his shirt? How often some little things irritate good men and women! Men screw themselves up to bear the great troubles of life, but with some intensely little things they get worried. I do not think that Paul was at all afraid of the devil; he was a match for him. But once we find that the devil did not go himself and attack Paul; he sent round one of his errand boys—"a messenger of Satan." He did not send him with a sword to fight Paul, or Paul would have fought, and vanquished him. But he came merely to buffet him, and he worried Paul; the Apostle could not endure the devil's page or errand-boy. Had it been a respectable sword—some fierce temptation—Paul would have been at him at once, and have overcome him; but the messenger of Satan only brought a thorn in the flesh. A thorn in the finger is a very nasty thing; it is no small pain to handle one. But if it should fester, what pain it will cause! So it is with small troubles. If we take the little things to God in prayer they will become great proofs of the Saviour's great condescension in helping us through them.

There is another field of proof that I shall not enter upon; I will only open the gate, and leave you to go in and explore. It is the field of providence. "There is a providence that shapes our ends"—God, who rules and overrules. Have you not found it so? How often we forget that providences are not singular, but continual! You have heard of the Parsee who had to ride twenty miles to meet his wife, who also rode twenty from another direction. When they got to the meeting-place the man said, "Father, I have had a most remarkable providence. When riding, my horse stumbled very badly, as late than three times, yet he did not come down; so I have reached you safely." The father replied, "My son, I have had an equally remarkable providence; my horse never stumbled at all, so I have got safely to you." Don't you think we forget that those providences that seem to need no providence are those that have most providence in them? From day to day our bread comes, and we forget that the manna fell from heaven. Do we not sometimes need to have the manna stopped for a week, in order to make us feel how dependent we are upon God for it? We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose; let us keep this in mind.

There is another line of argument I could take up at great length—*the way in which God supports His people when they come to die*. They die, and we need not sigh about it; we may rather sing. I said to one the other day, "Brother So-and-so has gone home." The good man answered me, "Where should he go else? It was getting evening time with him, and it was time the child went home!" So it is. We have been told that Jesus can cheer and comfort us in our dying hours. We have not yet come to this last test of all, but we have been very near it sometimes. Some of us know what it is to lie by the month together on the edge of eternity, looking in at the chinks of the door. It is blessed work, when you rest upon Christ, to lie expecting soon to see Him. It is a sweet thing to see all earthly things melting away behind you, and everything heavenly coming nearer to you. Some of us have the most of our friends on the other side of the flood, and it is going home, indeed, for our friends are there now. Some of you have lost a husband or a dear wife; many of you have lost children or a venerated father, and some of the dearest earthly relatives. They have gone to make company for you. God would not take you to heaven till He had gathered a circle of friends for you, especially your Lord, whose face you shall soon see.

I have no theory about what dying men see, but I have a deep impression that before the death of many of God's saints it would be impossible to tell whether they were on the earth or in heaven. Their bodies lie before us on the bed exhausted and faint, but there is a far-away look on their face, and sometimes they say strange things—things which if it were lawful for us to repeat them we could not quite comprehend. There is an ent-

dent something that they see and hear. You must know that I am speaking to dreams now, but a matter of fact that brings strange things before your memory. There is an evident introduction of them into Immanuel's city: if they are not within the gate, yet they are so near that they see through it. I do believe they pass through the whitness of death and gates of centuries, and begin to see the King in His beauty. Whether that be so or not, if ever you have spoken to them at such times they will tell you that all is well. My dear venerable grandfather, at the age of 86, was passing away, and my uncle said to him:

"Firm on the earth Thy Gospel stands,
My Lord, my hope, my trust;
If I am found in Jesus' hands,
My soul can never be lost."

"Well, James," said the dying saint, "I do not care much about that verse; it is not strong enough for me. It says, 'Firm on the earth,' but that is not firm at all. It is all slipping away from my view. I like Dr. Watts better in another verse:

"Firm as His throne His promise stands,
And He can well secure
What I've committed to His trust
Till the decisive hour."

Men who are in any horrible amusement do not draw distinctions about verses of poetry in that fashion. When John Hyatt lay dying, someone said to him (I think Dr. Lindsley), "You have trusted your soul to Jesus now for years; you are in the swellings of Jordan; can you trust Him with your soul now?" "Trust Him with one soul! I could trust Him with them all, if I had a million souls." So we can, and we shall do so in our last moments. We shall have grace given us in dying moments to sing joyfully, with all the strength we possess:

"Where is thy victory, boasting grave?
And whence, O death, thy sting?"

As to the stories of the death-beds of certain infidels, they are too horrible to read. We are perfectly satisfied to die with the assurance that, "when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

I have done, dear friends, and the proofs fetched from our experience are much more than sufficient. Let me say, if you want another set, I can find them on the other side. Will any of you turn aside from the old Gospel? Instead of reading your Bible, read novels; instead of going to conference and godly meetings, attend the theatre; instead of trying to deal honestly, try to get money anyhow you can. You will then see whether these things will afford you peace, whether they will lift you up and give you joy in death.

Although the old Gospel is said to decry works, it produces them in such a way as the new gospels do not produce them. They tell us that our Gospel teaches people to look to their own salvation, and be selfish. Now, that is a lie; because we teach them that to be saved is to be saved from being selfish, and we appeal to every one who is honest whether we, who preach this Gospel, which they say is selfish, are not the very men and women who are carrying on orphanages, colleges, mission-halls, Sunday-schools, and every other work of faith and labour of love. We prove by our practice that we love the souls of men. If we have not proved it enough—and I fear we have not—we will go on to prove it more; for there is nothing, it seems to me, that can urge us on to glory, and virtue, and self-denial, and to seeking to bless our fellow-men, like the feeling that we are debtors unto the God of all grace.

God bless you! May this Book be written on your hearts, may its precepts be exemplified in your lives, and may its doctrines be the comfort of your souls! I have had great joy in addressing you: may the Holy Spirit set His seal to the testimony I have borne! May the Lord pour out His blessing on all the work done here, and on all in connexion with it, henceforth and for evermore! Amen.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD.

By the Rev. C. B. Syms, Congregational Church, Leytonstone.

(Address delivered at Whitney Conference Hall on March 20.)

The Evangelist John paints a very natural scene where Jews gather round a lowly man, who speaks with great authority, and makes mysterious allusions to his parentage, until at last they ask, "Who art Thou? Where is Thy Station?" On the answer to those questions rests our faith.

It is not uncommon now to say, "I believe in Jesus Christ because the truths which He has taught commend themselves to my moral nature." May we not rather reverse the order and base our acceptance of our Lord's teaching on our confidence in Him? "Who art Thou, Lord?" This is the supreme question in relation to Christianity.

For Christianity rests on the personality of Christ more heavily than any other religion on its founder. Other teachers have promulgated great moral precepts, and laid down leading principles which carry their own authority on their front. As soon as they are uttered our conscience and reason endorse them, and we feel, whatever the speaker may be, the Word is true. But a great deal of our Lord's teaching, and specially that which is concerned with the redemption of our souls, does not carry this internal evidence, and would not commend itself to our human judgment and conscience: *e.g.*, our Lord is not the only teacher who has told us substantially "to do good, hoping for nothing again," and when the precept is uttered we feel at once its intrinsic moral obligation; but when our Lord says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," or "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day," the words carry no intrinsic authority, and base their claim on our faith solely on the personal authority of the speaker. If He be divine, and fills eternity, He can guarantee our eternal future. If He be only human, eternity makes Him as helpless as we are.

We venture, then, most reverently to look our Lord in the face and ask, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

This is not the occasion to attempt the proof of doctrine. It is a meeting for testimony, not for argument. We are simply testifying to the truths which are most surely believed among us. I therefore assume that our Lord is entitled to our perfect confidence, and that when He bears witness of Himself His witness is true. What, then, is the declaration of Jesus concerning Himself?

1. *His Pre-existent Distinct Life.* He teaches us that we are to seek the explanation of His earthly life in His previous heavenly existence. "Ye are from beneath, I am from above." "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go unto the Father." "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." In such words as these our Lord asserts His separateness from the Father, and yet His unity with the Father. He teaches us that the unity of God is no arithmetical unity, nor is it a uniformity. It is a unity which includes an inner diversity; a unity which is consistent with a distinction between the Father and the Son. That there should be such a distinction in the Divine Being seems demanded by some of the perfections of God. Is not God love? Yet the conception of God, existing as a solitary monad from all eternity, seems to clash with this attribute. For a loving being to have existed from eternity without any object to love is incongruous. From all eternity was it true: The Father loveth the Son.

2. *His Special Sonship.* This, then, is the relation which our Lord bears to the Divine Being—the Son of God. He claims for Himself a divine Sonship which differs and excels any sonship which man bears to God. No man, however pure he may be, can reflect more than the moral perfections of God—truth, righteousness, love. No man can aspire to share these physical perfections, which are inseparable from deity, omnipotence, and infinity, but these are claimed and exhibited by Christ; nor can any man claim that equality with God in a pre-existent state, which our Saviour asserts repeatedly. Our Lord claims, then, that He had a personal existence as the Son of God before He became incarnate. I am aware that the Sonship of the Lord Jesus is a profound mystery which no language of ours can fully define. Sabellius sought to represent the relationship of Jesus to the Divine Being by resolving the distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit into three manifestations of the one existence, by which our Lord was to the Father what a ray of light is to the sun, and God revealed Himself in Christ simply as a man of genius may reveal himself in a work of skill. I am conscious of a great tendency in our own times to fall into the old error. It would save many intellectual difficulties if we could thus satisfy the teaching of Scripture. How could the Father show all that He doeth unto the Son, or give all things into His hand, if He were identical?

The Word not only was God, but was with God in the beginning as a distinct personal existence.

Thus much for the separate personal existence of our Lord as the Son of God.

3. *An Uncreated Sonship.* The next fact with regard to this Sonship of God is, that He never had a creation or beginning. The Arian contention that our Saviour was the first and grandest creation of God has never satisfied the heart of Christendom, nor its head either, because it does such violence to the statements of Scripture. Nor has Unitarianism, which is substantially the same as Arianism, ever succeeded in winning the more profound minds, though it has often captivated acute thinkers, nor has it ever inspired a vigorous church. The Christian conscience can yield to the authority only of God. The Christian heart can only respond to the touch of God. Conceive of Christ as only the grandest of creatures, and we see Him crownless, sceptreless. Only as we see in Him the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, one who "has neither beginning of days nor end of years," do we with all our hearts leap up in exultant adoration and cry, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ! Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father!"

4. *The Eternal Sonship of Christ.*

This last clause asserts what is to me the profoundest mystery of the Saviour's Person, viz., His eternal Sonship, a mystery in regard to which it is easier to grasp certain positive ideas than to reconcile them one with another, or with other truths respecting Christ.

(1.) We do read in Scripture that the Saviour has the *ground of His existence* in the Father. The root of the Son's existence is in the independent life of the Father. As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath *He given* to the Son to have life in Himself. And yet while thus the life of our Lord seems to have its spring in the being of the Father, we are not to regard it as having a beginning, but as completely co-existent with the Father as the shadow is co-existent with the body, or the radiance is co-existent with the sun.

(2.) He was in loving fellowship with the Father.

Beyond this we can more clearly see that between our Lord and His Father there has been eternal communion. Our Saviour speaks of Himself as even prior to the incarnation one with the Father and the Father with Him. He declares that even while He is on earth He is also in heaven. "Even the Son of Man which is in heaven." The Son lives by the Father, and communicates to us what He has seen of the Father. The Father loveth the Son, and this fact sets our Saviour before us in even a more glorious light than all the visions of Revelation in which rank after rank of shining holy ones bow before Him in loviest reverence, and praise Him in gladdest rong.

(3.) He is subordinate to the Father.

Yet the Saviour represents Himself throughout as subordinate to the Father. The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father do. And when Jesus has done His mediatorial work, He is represented as giving up the kingdom to the Father. "The Son Himself also shall be subject unto Him who

put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

Not unreasonably is the Christian Church jealous for the divine glory of her Lord. Let the Unitarians magnify the human nobleness of our Saviour, and while we listen to their adulation we sigh, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." We are, indeed, told that there is something of God in every man, only that Jesus had more than the ordinary share. What man in the very crisis of his life would dare to appeal to God to restore him to the glory which He had before the world was? What man is possessed of such divinity that he can walk the waves and open the grave and burst his own bond of death?

Before men can alter our conceptions of Christ they must blot out the record of His unique life, His wondrous words, His glorious resurrection and ascension. While there remain to us these miracles of power and mercy, while we listen to those sublime discourses in which our Lord bade the brethren farewell, that He might re-enter the Father's glory—discourses in which, with such simple but solemn grandeur, He asserted that He was equal with God—while we listen to those reassuring words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," which have dried up many tears and stilled the sighs of saddened hearts, and nerved departing souls for the great unknown, as they relied on meeting the other side of that "dark shadow, clothed from head to feet, who keeps the keys of all the creeds," Him who holds the keys and opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers,—we shall still claim for Him the pre-eminence as the image of the invisible God, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

SIN: ITS EXTENT AND CONSEQUENCES.

By the Rev. William Park, M.A., Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

(Address delivered at Mildmay Conference Hall on March 20.)

It is said that the Wahaggas in Central Africa have no word to express either sin or atonement. In this case, as in many others, the exception may be said to prove the rule. Everywhere, in all nations and in all ages, we find in the hearts of men the feeling that there is something not only in their surroundings, in the world in which they live, but also in their lives and characters, that is not as it ought to be—in other words, we find that they have a sense of sin. That feeling of sin is often distorted, and assumes many curious shapes. This is exactly what we would expect if human nature has fallen; for conscience, of course, must share in the fall, and though not utterly silenced, its voice will be often indistinct, its judgments often mistaken. If you talk to a Buddhist priest in Siam, he will confess that he is a sinner; but what he means by sin is that he had let particles of rice drop from his mouth when he was eating, or that he had not shaved his eyebrows, or that, washing himself in the darkness, he had, without knowing it, taken the life of some tiny insect. If you talk to a Hindu, he will tell you that he is a sinner; but you will find that the sin which troubles him is that he has partaken of broth in which beef was boiled, or that he has eaten with a man of a different caste, or that he has been disrespectful to a Brahman. If you talk to a Chinaman, he may possibly confess that he has sinned, but the sin before his mind is that he has trampled upon a grain of rice or on a piece of paper on which were written characters, or that he has neglected on the proper day to offer worship before the ancestral tablets. A Chinaman will sometimes sit down in the evening to balance his accounts for the day. He puts his evil actions on one side, and his meritorious ones on the other, and he generally brings in a balance to his credit. The sense of sin is there, though it is confused and distorted. The Taoists, in China, teach that for a great sin twelve years are taken from a man's life; for a small sin one hundred days. Terrible tortures are pictured in some of the faiths of heathendom as inflicted on wicked souls in the next world; and you may sometimes see a poor fellow in India measuring the way to some distant shrine by the length of his body, as he painfully drags himself along, stretched out his full length upon the ground. Conscience is there at work; it is, as it were, groping in darkness; there is need of light from heaven. There are thousands in India and China to-day who have come to feel that they need salvation such as the Gospel offers, though as yet they have not got strength to come out and confess Christ, and take the consequences. The dry bones in the valley are stirring, but they have not yet come together to form a living army.

Among ourselves—that is, among those who live in Christian lands—a sense of sin may be said to be universal. Are there any men or women among us who are entirely contented with their own state? Sometimes we feel ourselves in the presence of a duty which ought to be done, and which we are unable to rouse ourselves to perform, and that is an awful thing. We see temptation coming, and we know that we are certain to fall; sometimes we even long for temptation in order that we may have an excuse for sin: both states are equally terrible. Our "sin of sins" too often is that we are not masters of ourselves. A small scroll, as some one says, would contain all our victories over evil; a whole volume might be filled with the record of our defeats. As Carlyle puts it, the devil often speaks out of us in disordered sentences. We cannot help fearing death, not so much from the pain that accompanies it as from the judgment that lies beyond it. It is this which produces the restlessness and discontent which are so common. We feel this life of ours is not what it might be, and that somehow it is our own fault.

"We only know this buried root of life
Holds still, it knows not why, within its heart
A vague tradition of an upper light
To which it strives, and dying, spent, and foiled,
It feebly feels it should have borne a flower
'Neath some propitious heaven."

Nor can we hope that sin will pass away after a little time. Time does much to mitigate sorrow. It binds up broken hearts; it patches us up again after we have been sorely wounded; it removes

painful memories; it fills vacant places; "over every grave a rank rises at last." Time also changes many of our desires and aims. But history and experience tell us that sin is not a mere passing defect which time removes. It is true that there are certain sins which disappear in certain places as the ages roll on. For 2,000 years and more the lessons of idolatry has never recommenced in the Jewish nation; the bloody track of the slave driver is no longer seen in any so-called Christian country, the tyranny and oppression under which woman suffered long, and disgraceful suffers, have become to us here only a story of the past. We could easily argue that in some of these cases the disappearance of certain sins is due to the progress of Christianity. But it is not necessary for our purpose; let us rather notice that, while certain *sins* vanish, *sin* always abides. The fountain of evil never runs dry, though the streams that proceed from it vary in their appearance and their character. There are some who are always exclaiming that the former days were better than these. I do not sympathise with them. I believe that, through the influence of the Gospel, the air of our social life has been wonderfully purified. But certainly, when we look upon our great cities and our modern civilization, and think of the sins they have produced, or which have grown up in the midst of them,—the worldliness, the drunkenness, the uncleanness, the oppression of the poor and of the weak—the maiden tributes of our modern Babylons,—when we gaze on these horrible, hardening, heart-breaking sins, we are almost tempted to despair, and to say that we are as far as ever, even in this nineteenth century, from getting rid of sin. It is the same with the individual. The sins of childhood, its peevishness, and changefulness, and disobedience, disappear as youth opens before us; but youth brings with it a pride, a vanity, a recklessness of its own. As a youth passes through the golden gate of manhood, a sobering influence passes over him; but strong passions, a longing to be rich at any cost, the love of pleasure, a determination to crush others down and mount the ladder of life over their heads—such foes as these lie in wait for him; how few fully escape from their hands! And when old age comes upon a man, the shadows close around him, and the fountain of many pleasures once delighted in dries up; then avarice often lays hold upon him, hardening, petrifying every tender thought and feeling, and withering the whole nature up. Sickness is found often to make men selfish, and prosperity to produce pride; riches to foster selfishness and luxurious living, poverty to produce discontent. Each event that happens to a man seems to have some sin corresponding to it, which it is apt to awaken in his heart. Evidently the tree is corrupt in all positions and at all seasons, and it brings forth corrupt fruit. The poet's words are surely true in the case of every man who carefully, truly studies himself—

> "He knows a traitor in his blood
> At such strange war with something good,
> He may not do the thing he would."

There are many who do not trouble themselves much about sin; their own special sins they dearly love. It is more to the point to them to learn that they cannot hope to sin and escape the consequences of their evil doings. In some day or other suffering is pretty sure, sooner or later, to constitute the evil doer. I may forget my sin and fancy I have left it behind me for ever; but my sin is lying at my door all the time, and some day faces me to my confusion, or springs upon me and destroys me. I may escape the effects of my sin myself, but I see them entering into the lives and corrupting the happiness of my children. No nation which has abused its prosperity, and given way to cruelty and licentiousness, no church which, growing large and prosperous, has also grown lazy and corrupt; no man who practises any vice, however secretly, but finds sooner or later that the moral law under which he lives is this—"As we sow, so shall he reap." Suffering does not follow sin instantly; but stand back, and watch the great Weaver at His work, try to grasp the pattern He is developing, and His meaning will soon grow plain. There is a God that judgeth in the earth. Nor is there any hope that death will take us out of the reach of sin and of its consequences. We do not know much about death; but as we know it, it is chiefly a physical change. A man might declare that death ends all, and that the life of both soul and body is put out at the moment of death, though in doing so he would do violence to every noble thought and instinct of his heart. As Goethe said: "They who expect no other life than this are to this life already dead." But that death has any power to change the general tenor of a man's character, to alter his relation to God and righteousness, is a thing which we have no reason to believe. The ancients fabled a river Lethe, the waters of which when drunk by the dead produced forgetfulness of the past; and the Chinese have in their Pantheon a goddess, Miss Mang by name, who can put into the hands of the spirit in the other world a cup of happy oblivion. But we know these things are only fables; death does not touch the spirit, nor alter the general tenor of a man's character, nor change his relation to God; and as sin takes a firmer hold of the man who yields to it every day on earth, there is nothing to make me believe but that he who dies in his sins shall abide in those sins, and be more and more mastered and ruined by them throughout eternity. It is not death we should seek if we want deliverance from bondage, and unrest, and sorrow; it is death to evil. Altogether the outlook for our race is a very hopeless one, in regard to sin and its consequences, if we shut out the teachings of the Bible. But, thank God, we have a voice from heaven to guide us out of the gloom.

> "At last I heard a voice upon the slope
> Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope?'
> To which an answer pealed from that high land,
> But in a tongue no man could understand;
> And on the glittering summit, far withdrawn,
> God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."

As we turn towards the dawn, to catch that light which has shone from heaven, at first it only seems to make our darkness deeper. There are certain truths written in sympathetic ink upon the heart of man by nature which are brought out distinctly by the Word of God when it comes into contact with our spirits, through the operations of the Holy Spirit. It is so with regard to sin; we all know there is something wrong within us.

but the first thing that the Word of God does, when it is applied to a man's heart, is to rectify and deepen that sense of sin. Compare the moral tone of society in this country, where Bible teaching is in the air, with that which prevails in India and China. Compare the feeling a worldly man has in regard to sin, a man whose whole heart is occupied with thoughts of profit or pleasure and whose views are bounded by the horizon of earth and time—compare his views with those of a Christian who has been taught by the Spirit of God. A worldly man cannot understand it when he sees his Christian friend bowed to the very dust at the thought of some single irreverent word he has spoken, or some sudden outburst of temper, which was repented of and apologized for almost in a moment. He is surprised to see that his neighbour is not content with a decent, honest life, and careful attention to religious ordinances; but is ever mourning over the fact that his thoughts, his motives, his feelings are still impure. But there is nothing extraordinary or extravagant in the Christian's sense of sin. If I serve a holy God, who desires that His creatures shall be holy, it is but natural that I should regard with abhorrence every sin, however small, even as He does, and that my prayer should be, "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." If I am a follower of the Holy Jesus, I cannot rest content till I attain to the standard He has set before me: "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbour as thyself."

One thing is clear: the higher a man rises Godwards, the more does he feel the infinite evil and vileness of sin, the lower will he be in God's sight on account of his own shortcomings and transgressions. "Less than the least of all God's mercies," as George Herbert quaintly puts it, will to the end be "his prey still."

About the origin of sin the Bible does not say much, but it has a great deal to say about its results. No doubt there are many difficulties surrounding the origin of evil in the universe; but its existence does not prove that there is no God, nor that there are two Gods, a good and an evil one, nor that God has been conquered by evil. There are too many proofs that there is one great, wise, good, almighty Person, who is in all, and through all, and over all. All that we can infer from the present state of things is—and in drawing this inference we are aided by revelation—that God for good reasons has permitted evil to enter His creation, that He will conquer it, and bring good out of it somehow in the end. The secret things belong to God, and we need not vex ourselves about them. As to the origin of sin in this world, the Bible tells us enough to satisfy us, and facts correspond with its statements. We know and feel that we are a fallen race, that we each bring with us into the world a sinful heart, and that out of that sinful heart evil thoughts and evil words flow day by day. We are evidently members of a fallen race; we may as well face the fact. But this fact gives us more we cannot for his own sin, if for no other reason, than for "thine every one of us has a thousand times continued to do right when we might have done it, and taken the wrong way when the right one was plain and clear in view. We have made good resolutions, which evaporate have kept; but like the pretty frost writing on the window pane, it was not long till they were running, "a blur of tears," and had been utterly forgotten. We should have stood up for God and truth against the world, saying not though we had not a single grain of human approbation to encourage us, but who has done so? The truth is, when a man is truly awakened to see his state before God, the fact that he inherits a fallen nature, instead of being used as an excuse for evil-doing, only deepens his shame and penitence. "My sin I ever see," cries David in Ps. li., and he hastens to add, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

As to the results of sin, they are terrible as pictured to us in the Bible. Over and above those which we see and feel, what awful words the Bible has to say about man's present state through sin. Think of these two expressions: "Children of wrath"—as if wrath were our parent, under whose roof we should live for ever; "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him"—God's anger, scrolling for a dwelling-place in the world, has found it on the head of the sinful man. The wrath of God here and hereafter, and banishment from His glorious presence—these, as the Bible reveals them to us, are the results of sin.

As to the future punishment of sin, there must be distinct Christian teaching on this subject, if for no other reason, because Christ has taught us to think about it; but all our teaching should be diffused with tenderness. "Of whom," says Paul, "I tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ;" and surely we may well weep when we think of the consequences which that enmity brings. Some men have realized more deeply than their neighbours the meaning of the future punishment of sin, and it has driven them continually to plead with God in prayer with tears and groans, and sent them out to labour night and day for the salvation of perishing men. I think there is one statement about the future of sinful men in which possibly all here might be agreed—there is not one word of hope in the Bible for those who die impenitent. A man may say, "God has some purpose of mercy beyond the grave which He has not revealed to us;" but it is sufficient answer to that to say that it is only with the things that are revealed we have to do. There are one or two mysterious texts dealing with the great future which it is very difficult to interpret; but to build on them a doctrine or dogma which would be opposed to the general teaching of Scripture would be a very foolish method of interpretation. Look at the oft-repeated and terrible statements of the Son of God, whose nature and whose name is love—"cast out into outer darkness;" "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" "these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life everlasting;" and worst of all, as it seems to me, those awful words which Christ uttered to the Jews: "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins;" "wrapped up in them as in a deadly poison mist, self-woven, and from which there is no escape for ever. As the curtain falls in the distant future, all God's intelligent creatures have not been reduced to one class, those who fear and worship Him. Two classes are distinctly seen, life and death, no doubt, have been cast out into the darkness; but sin is still doing its deadly work, and doing it, so far as man can see, beyond all hope of cessation or recovery for evermore.

The Bible concludes all under sin, and the wages of sin is death. Our only safety, as regards that great eternity, is, fully and thankfully, to turn our back on sin, and accept God's mercy and Spirit now; for, indeed, to every one of us eternity has already begun.

Here my subject ends, and yet one cannot end here; to end thus would mean despair. You all know the picture in which, out of a raging, stormy sea, a great stone cross rises, built upon the solid rock; and to this cross a poor, shipwrecked woman is clinging, while the waves are beating against her and threatening to wash her away. Amid the awful sea of sin and guilt the Cross of Jesus rises, and he who clings to it is safe. On that boundless ocean of wrath an ark is floating, and the door is open; any one may enter it. God, against whom we have sinned, has himself provided a Sin-bearer and a Sacrifice. He has made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. Down from the distant heaven a hand has been stretched to us, and in that hand is a gift, the most precious gift that even God can give—the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Dove who descended on Christ at the moment of His baptism is promised to us also; and if we seek for Him He will come down upon us, calming the storms within us, and bringing back to our sin-tossed and troubled hearts the very peace of God. The more the sight and the presence of sin afflicts us, the more earnestly let us look to Him who came to destroy the works of the devil. Once I trust in Jesus, sin loses all its power to condemn; and the more I give myself up to Christ, the more sin loses its power to pollute and destroy. Let us then spread the glorious Gospel far and near; and so labour to hasten the day when every cloud shall vanish, every storm be hushed, when in this earth of ours the tides of sin shall ebb, to flow again no more.

THE HOLY GHOST, THE AUTHOR AND SUSTAINER OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

By the Rev. THOMAS McCULLAGH (Ex-President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference).

(Address delivered at Mildmay Conference Hall on March 20.)

PAUL'S question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" was a test question. It is still pertinent and necessary, and, in answering it, no one in England to-day can say, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." The twelve imperfectly-instructed disciples at Ephesus who gave that reply—that is, if we adhere to the Authorised Version instead of adopting the Revised—might have learned from their master, John the Baptist, if they had not forgotten it after the lapse of more than twenty years, that there is a Holy Ghost. Of himself he said, "I indeed baptize with water unto repentance;" but of the Mightier One who came after him, he added, "He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." In England the Third Person of the Trinity is constantly referred to in the religious services of all Christian churches. Millions repeat every Sabbath after the minister, in the words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," or, in the language of the Nicene Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the Prophets." Congregations who do not use these ancient forms are reminded of Him in the most frequently-sung and familiarly-known verse in English poetry, Bishop Ken's doxology—

> "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
> Praise Him all creatures here below;
> Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
> Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

And further, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, they are reminded of Him in the most frequently quoted and most extensively-known passage of Scripture, St. Paul's benediction, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen." And yet how many there are who have heard that there is a Holy Ghost, but believe it not! This is the case with all avowed anti-Trinitarians. This is the case, too, with some who belong to churches whose confessions of faith are orthodox. They do not profess to be Deists, or Arians, or Unitarians, but they try to modify, or attenuate, or explain away the Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit. Some of them, we fear, are ministers who, of course, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They conclude their religious services as others do, with the apostolic benediction, but in their meaning, or with their mental reservation, it is the benediction of "another Gospel." The "grace" of their Jesus Christ is the grace of a creature, and the "communion" of their Holy Ghost is fellowship with an influence or operation, an impersonal something without intelligence. And these, in their incongruous jumble of ideas, they dare to place on a level with the "love" of an infinite God. This, surely, is the absurdity of reason, the irrationality of Rationalism.

As in some stately temple made with hands, like St. Paul's in London, or St. Peter's in Rome, to omit or alter any object or feature would mar the original design, so is it with the temple of revealed truth, as it came from the hands of the Divine Architect. To interfere with any particular part is to injure the unity of the whole. If in our examination of revealed truth we "search the Scriptures," with the light of Him who inspired them, with the aid of Him who "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," we shall discover the oneness, the unity, the harmony, the beauty, the perfection of the completed whole. The connexion of one Gospel doctrine with another is such that one cannot be renounced or corrupted without leading inevitably to the surrender or corruption of another and another, if not of all. For instance, let the doctrine of human depravity on account of Adam's fall be rejected, and the doctrine of atonement must be rejected too. If a man disbelieves that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," he will also disbelieve that "by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

The next link in the ruptured chain of revealed truth that will be cast away is sure to be the

doctrine of regeneration. If a man's nature be not essentially sinful, of course he needs no second birth; if he happens to do wrong now and then, with a nature not radically depraved, he must be capable of self-reformation, and his innate potentialities, in such a case, will render him independent of Divine intervention and help. Rejecting the doctrine of regeneration, it follows that the Holy Spirit as a regenerating and sanctifying agent will be rejected too.

The defection from revealed truth on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit has resulted from one of the two great erroneous tendencies in religious thought which have been prevalent ever since error entered the world with sin. One has been in the direction of an excessive supernaturalism, which attaches a supernatural virtue to even certain material objects, and a supernatural efficacy to certain human administrations and acts. The other is in the very opposite direction of a complete anti-supernaturalism. When our Lord was upon earth these tendencies, diverging from the line of truth in opposite directions, were in organized form and full force within the Jewish Church in the rival sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They have ever been found in Christendom, and have succeeded in overthrowing the faith of some. In our day British churches have to guard against both the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of the Sadducees. Perhaps those set for the defence of the Gospel have paid, not too much, but too exclusive an attention to the encroachments of the Pharisees, and whilst so watching, the leaven of the Sadducees, which in its strong antipathies to the supernatural has spared neither the Person nor operations of the Holy Spirit, has been spreading with disastrous results. It is now for the friends of truth, with the help of the insulted Spirit himself, to purge out the old leaven that they may be a new lump.

In regarding the Holy Ghost as the author and sustainer of spiritual life, we assign Him the place given Him in the Bible in the great work of redemption. The Father originated and began the work, when "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." The Son was the actual Redeemer, and from "the old, old story" you know how the work was accomplished by the "incarnation, nativity, baptism, fasting and temptation, the agony and bloody sweat, the cross and passion, the precious death and burial, the glorious resurrection and ascension." Or, to use the language of Scripture, He was "delivered for our offences and raised for our justification." The part taken by the Holy Ghost is that of the Administrator of redemption. There is a mission of the Spirit as distinctive as the mission of the Son. Our Lord himself taught His disciples to expect it. He promised "the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name," and again, "If I depart I will send Him unto you." And we know how the promise was fulfilled. When He ascended upon high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, He sent, as the chiefest, and including all the others, the gift of the Holy Ghost. The mission of the Spirit is to give life to dead souls—dead in trespasses and sins. In the administration of redemption, by a new birth, He gives to those upon whom He operates a new nature, and the life from the dead which He thus communicates He sustains by His own indwelling. So complete is that that St. Paul says, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" The description given of Stephen, "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," applies to all believers who have attained "the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." The mission of the Spirit is still in progress, as the Christian dispensation is the dispensation of the Spirit. To some extent He was in the world from the beginning. At creation He "moved upon the face of the waters." Before the flood He "strove with man." We see Him and hear Him in Isaiah's temple-vision. All the way through He was the Inspirer of the prophets. They "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But in comparison to the fulness in which He was given on the day of Pentecost, the antecedent period is spoken of as the time when He was not given. When on the last great day of the feast Jesus called upon the thirsty to come to Him and drink, with the wonderful promise that out of him who believed on Him should flow rivers of living water, St. John adds, "this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should afterwards receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." When the suffering Redeemer became the glorified Mediator, then came Pentecost and its wonders, with its soul-saving scenes and spiritual power. Then, as a result, arose Christian churches, walking in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost and were edified and multiplied. As the promise spoken by the Prophet Joel is "unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call," let us who "stand up for Jesus" also bear our testimony for the Lord the Spirit. We are His witnesses. Let our pulpits witness for Him, not only by preaching about Him, but by preaching in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Let our congregations witness for Him in the ordinances of public worship. Whether they use some venerable liturgical form, or pray *ex tempore*, let them "pray with the Spirit and the understanding also, and sing with the Spirit and with the understanding also."

Let our psalmody and hymnody be as faithful in invoking His presence and power in the future as they have been in the past. Let the Church of England sing with its own Bishop Heber:—

> "Spirit of truth, on this Thy day,
> To Thee for help we cry,
> To guide us through the dreary way
> Of dark mortality."

Let Nonconformist churches sing with their own Dr. Watts:—

> "Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
> With all Thy quickening powers,
> Kindle a flame of sacred love
> In these cold hearts of ours."

Let the people called Methodists sing with their own Charles Wesley:—

> "Assembled here with one accord,
> Calmly we wait the promised grace,
> The purchase of our dying Lord;
> Come, Holy Ghost, and fill the place."

As individual Christians, born again of the Spirit, let us witness for Him by the testimony of holy living. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PROPITIATION FOR SIN.

By the Rev. CHARLES NEW, Congregational Church, Hastings.

(Address delivered at Ministry Conference Hall on March 29.)

Let us not be afraid of a theory of the Atonement. It may be enough for bare salvation to know (as the dying thief did) that somehow the crucified Saviour saves; but it is not enough for Christian assurance and strong Christian life. Vagueness in this is profound spiritual weakness. It has its mysteries we cannot fathom; as we approach it we may, indeed, take off our shoes, for the place is bright with the glory of God; but as there is a voice there, it becomes us reverently to listen till that voice comes to speak. What God is pleased to tell us of salvation—be it little or much—it is as much our duty as our enrichment to hear. And it is not little; He has not left us in the dark where most we need light. He not only tells that Jesus saves, but how; and so far from fearing, let us rather rejoice to grasp, and cleave to, and proclaim that how. The word "propitiation," for instance, has a well-defined meaning (and in itself embodies a theory), and when we read it with what else Scripture teaches, we cannot be wrong in saying that the death of the Lord Jesus is the one means by which God extends His favour to sinful men. Other features of Christ's work have a necessary bearing on Redemption. His very advent is a revelation of the divine love which might well move us to holiness, and His example and teaching are the law for the redeemed. These are vital facts. But when we ask how fallen man can be restored to God, we are pointed, not to these, but to that without which even they have no practical force: "Christ the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

We will think of propitiation needed, provided, and made use of.

In the first place, then, the need of propitiation. To propitiate is to turn away wrath. Propitiation implies wrath. We would rather not think of the wrath of God; we feel that judgment is His strange work, but "propitiation" has no meaning unless the wrath of God be real.

Hardly anything is more to be dreaded than an inadequate sense of sin, and its desert. But alone we cannot avoid that; our judgment is perverted and biassed, and even when it does not lead us wrong, must come far short of the mark. We think of the effect of sin in ourselves; we see it to be the great curse, mother of all the curses of the race; we view it in its antagonism to the majesty of heaven; we remember its relation to the cross of Christ—that it raised that cross, that it needed it, that it is the perpetual rejection of its claims; and we gaze with trembling into what Scripture calls "the perdition of ungodly men;" but even then, overwhelmingly appalling as it is, our view of sin falls short. Sin is as it is to God. The nearer we come to Him, the more we dwell in His holiness, and see things from His standpoint, the better we know what sin is; but, of necessity, the knowledge of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin" is hidden in the divine mind. We can, however, learn much from the revealed attitude of God towards it. "God is Love," love which passeth knowledge, love which only found adequate expression in the cross of His dear Son. Yet He says, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" "The wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience;" "He that believeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him;" "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever;" "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" "Treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;" "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel;" "The winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

These are not isolated passages, they occur all through Scripture. Nor are they ambiguous; it is not divine sorrow of which they speak, nor even divine displeasure, but divine wrath. When we put them together we have an indescribable revelation of sin. Many of them, no doubt, are figurative, but God's figures are figures of the true. And their truth is sustained by history. The curse that from the first has followed it, and, above all, the cross where it was condemned and punished, show that words cannot tell our mind, conceive what sin is, and what the necessary wrath against it of the Holy One.

There lies the need of propitiation—there is divine wrath to be turned away. Whilst that wrath remains God cannot receive man, and man cannot go to God. If we ask, how God's wrath utters itself, we may venture to reply, In His separation from the sinner. Can anything be worse than that? Can "outer darkness" conceal what it is for a soul to be left with its sins cut off from God? "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God." Eternal death is to be cut off from Him. It was so at first: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" and die they did that day in the sundering of their fellowship with heaven. It will be so at last, for "those who obey not the Gospel" are to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." It is so always: "Your sins have separated between you and your God." Now without some propitiation by which God's wrath is turned away, that separation must continue.

But why propitiation? If a parent can lay aside his anger merely on the child's contrition, cannot God? That is not a correct statement of the case. God has said that sin is such an evil that He cannot pass it by without penalty. If a parent has so said of the child's fault, the question is not whether he can pass it by without penalty, but whether he ought to. And we may ask, with reverence, whether God ought—whether He ought to ignore the guilt of sin, and the righteous threatenings He has pronounced upon it, by simply willing to take the sinner into His favour. There can be but one answer. Love ceases to deserve reverence if it ignores righteousness. The objection that this is a legal view of it has no force. Divine forgiveness must be legal. The terms used to describe it are necessarily legal. God is not only Father, He is Sovereign. Sin is rejection of His law, rebellion against His majesty, and its forgiveness must be in harmony with law and the inviolable claims of His throne. Before God can receive back the sinner there is wrath to be averted in some way by which righteousness shall be equally honoured with mercy.

And man needs such propitiation, too; his moral

sense must be satisfied in any adequate redemption. Consider sacrifices at innumerable shrines witness to the conviction that God cannot pardon without penalty, and to those who read His Word and see what He has said, that conviction is impossible. We may try to make light of sin, and to think God can, but deep within there is a feeling which refuses to be silenced, that before God can receive us our guilty past has to be reckoned with, and there is wrath to be turned away. The Lord Jesus is no Saviour if He only reveal divine love; the revelation of the love against which we have sinned is but added condemnation. Nor is He a Saviour if He only reveal the divine will, come to lead me to God by permitting me to follow in His steps, for that only shows how hopelessly far I have wandered, and, as every attempt to follow proves, how hopeless such a following is. Jesus an example only, instead of my Saviour, is my despair. But when I turn to Scripture and see there that He is "the Propitiation for our sins," that by which the just wrath of God is averted, righteously, entirely, and for ever, He is a Saviour indeed; there my need is met—God's need and mine to one.

> "Then must he merciful whilst just;
> This is my soul's foundation."

Think, secondly, of the propitiation provided. Emphasising propitiation, we do not forget the other parts of our Lord's redeeming work. He is equally our Teacher, Example, Master, Intercessor, Life. But He only becomes these when we have first taken Him as "the Propitiation for our sins;" all else He is to us grows out of that. And here we notice that this is a propitiation provided and made by God himself. No feature of it needs to be urged more jealously, otherwise it presents grave difficulty. It might seem to imply that God needs to be appeased, that there must be intervention, something as it were to buy off His anger, and then that this was unjustly effected by punishing the innocent for the guilty. No wonder if many have revolted from that! A God whose love cannot pardon without intervention, and whose righteousness is allied to unrighteousness, cannot, we feel, be the God of the Bible. Nor is He. The Scripture doctrine of Propitiation knows nothing of these contradictions, nor could it suggest them but to those who forget that He who made the propitiation was God. Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . ." "And the Word was made flesh." We gaze on the cross, and say of the Sufferer there, with John, "This was the true God." This was no interposition to make God merciful; it sprung from His mercy. It was no laying our sin on another; it was the taking it upon Himself. The propitiation of which Scripture tells is not that God provided another for us, but that He himself, in His infinite mercy, made the atonement that was needed, ere He could turn away His righteous wrath from man.

Thus, this propitiation is by the substitutionary offering of God the Son. After the Fall, access to God was by sacrifice: "Without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sins." No truth was more impressed on the Jew than that the consequences of sin were only averted through sacrifice. Then Christ came as He in whom those sacrifices were fulfilled, and was declared to be "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." Hence salvation is uniformly said to be by His death, or His blood. He is never said to redeem us by His mere incarnation, nor by His temptation, nor by His holy life, nor by His witness for the truth, nor by His daily suffering in an evil world, but always by His death. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up;" "Christ died for the ungodly;" "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation" by His blood; we are "justified by His blood;" "We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins;" He hath "made peace through the blood of His cross;" "Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;" "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." And if we ask how this could turn away the wrath of God, we are told, By substitution. In no other way would Jewish sacrifices avail for the offerer; he, as it were, laid his sin on the head of the victim, and it was punished in the victim's death. So with Christ. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin;" He "was once offered to bear the sins of many;" "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust;" "Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree." It is said that this is impossible, since sin cannot be transferred. Of course it cannot; my sin is mine, and it can never be another's. Sin cannot be transferred, but penalty can. The Holy Son of God could not become a sinner, but He could take the sinner's place, and bear the sinner's doom. And obviously that is what Scripture teaches that He did. At Calvary He asserted His sinlessness in the cry, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" But the doom of sin was there. He for a moment was forsaken of the Father. Then He knew divine wrath, what it was to be cut off from God; and the solitude of that awful darkness—what was it but to descend into hell? Then, then, the divine wrath uttered itself, its threatenings were fulfilled. Sin was gathered up on one sacred Head, and judged and punished there.

Then, this propitiation is sufficient for the sins of the world. We cannot doubt that, if we remember by whom it was made. That the Father's co-equal Son stooped, though but for a moment, to sin's penalty, is, we are sure, a sufficient vindication of divine law, a sufficient expression of the wrath of God against sin. Then what is the result, pause? There is now an open way to God; His face, once averted from the sinner, is now towards him; the love once pent within Him is now set free, and, with outstretched arms, entreats the sinner to come and welcome. It seems to me that that is what we must fall to grasp; we understand that Christ died for our sins, but we do not understand that, as the consequence, our sins are already punished, and our separation from God in which the punishment consists need not last another hour. "Christ died to bring us to God." He has taken away the sin of the world; there it is no more there; the barrier between God and us is gone, and instead of the awful words we used to hear, "Depart from me!" we hear now,

"I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." That is the meaning of propitiation through Christ. He has taken every wrath by taking it on Himself, and now we have but to accept the divine favour. Prayer does not secure it, good works do not secure it, repentance does not secure it, faith does not secure it; Christ has secured it. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation;" for "He is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Then we need but glance at our last point—the propitiation made use of. If Christ has turned away wrath, can any sinner be lost? For the reply we have but to remember what (as we said at first) salvation is. It is not represented by penalty cancelled; that is but the open way to it; it is fellowship with God. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God." Propitiation does not save. It makes it possible for us to go to God; it enables Him to throw His door wide open, and to receive graciously and love freely all who come. But we must tread that open way; we must go to Him, and if in our freedom we choose not to, even He cannot save us; by our own will we are cut off from Him, and to be cut off from Him is to perish.

That is where faith comes in. "We are saved through faith." Faith sees that the great sacrifice has turned away wrath, and goes to God humbly, sure of acceptance. And that assurance is forthwith justified. In righteousness, everlasting love receives the returning one, pardon is whispered into his ear, and for ever and for ever he and God are one. In a word, propitiation removes the hindrance to the prodigal son going home, and when he says, "I will arise and go to my Father," faith is the going.

The end of it, therefore, is the final relationship fulfilled, and that is salvation. The dreadful storm-clouds of God's anger have rolled away, and given place to the sunshine of His Fatherly love. The cowering in the dark, far from Him, afraid of Him, rebellious to Him, has yielded to the spirit of the child at home, glad in the Father's favour, resting in the Father's care, submissive to the Father's will, growing into the Father's likeness; "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee; Thou wast angry with me, but Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me." That is what Christ has made possible to every sinful son of man. Since "He is the Propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," salvation now is in a man's own hands. Said Luther, "Thou, too, art part of the world; thine heart cannot think the Lord died for Peter and for Paul, but not for me."

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER.

By the Rev. C. A. Fox, B.A., Minister of Eaton Chapel.

(Address delivered at Mildmay Conference Hall on March 20.)

"But Christ, being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands."—Heb. ix. 11—15.

"Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come." I would bring briefly before you what are the "good things" here spoken of. In answering this, we shall have brought out that which is before us to-day, Christ the Propitiation and the perfect Righteousness of the believer.

It is very important to inquire what *are* the "good things" which Christ has brought. Surely under the old dispensation they had "good things." They had an altar and sacrifices, they had the tabernacle and priesthood, and the Shekinah-presence; they had the voice of God, they had visions of God, they had His direct leading, and so far they had the Spirit of God. What, then, are the "good things" of which it is here emphatically said that they were "to come"? Where is the superiority of to-day? In what does the superiority of the New Testament "good things" which have come with Christ consist as compared with those of the Old Testament?

I. The Superiority of the Majestic Foundations of the New Dispensation.

1. First of all, there has come with Christ a more perfect Tabernacle. True, Israel had their Tabernacle ordered in all things of God. But Christ brings us a more perfect Tabernacle. How is it more perfect? In various respects. It is not built with human hands; it cannot pass away, for it does not rest upon time, but is eternal in the heavens; nor is it beholden to human instrumentality to maintain.

And this "more perfect Tabernacle" has a new altar, even the Cross of Calvary. It was pitched outside the camp. It is a more perfect altar, for it looks behind and before, and is all-inclusive; it avails for Jew and Gentile alike. This is our one permanent, enduring Altar and Sacrifice; the Lord offered up Himself as the permanent abiding Sacrifice, whose efficacy is for ever. There is only one Offering, for it is of such infinite value that it covers all the past, and includes all the future; and it was only "once" offered, for it was of such unending merit that it needed not to be repeated.

Has this "more perfect Tabernacle" its Holy Place? Yes, verily it is the visible heaven which Christ passed through after His sacrifice. "We have a great High Priest that is passed through the heavens." He passed up from the altar of Calvary, where He was the victim, up through the Holy Place of the visible stainless heavens, and passed on still into the Holiest, unto the very Throne of the Eternal, by His own blood. From the altar, the place of the transgressor and the penalty, He passed to the Inner Shrine of the Presence of God. That is where He is now gone; "By His own blood, He entered in once into the Holy Place."

Thus the Tabernacle we have is infinitely "more correct;" and so is the perfection of the Altar and of the Offering. We have also a new highway, and a new Veil, "that is to say, His flesh;" a new Inner Shrine, our Shekinah glory, the very Presence of God. And we may go in, and see there on the Throne of the Eternal our Substitute, who is the brightness of the Father's glory.

And not only so, but we have a more perfect Tabernacle, in the very Person of Christ himself. He is not only the Altar and Sacrifice, but He is the Home and Tabernacle of God. He is the Altar; on His own perfect sinlessness He offers Himself, and pours out His blood; and He is the Priest himself who offers. He is the Sacrifice who dies, and then by His own power He rises again, and then, spontaneously and silently, He ascends and passes through the blue heavens into the Holiest! He is at once the Tabernacle, Altar, Offering, Priest, and Shrine; and He is the Shekinah light, "the brightness of His Father's glory."

This, then, is the first "good thing to come" which Christ has brought us—"a more perfect Tabernacle."

2. The next "good thing" is that we have a *more perfect Offering*. Read the words, "Neither by the blood of goats and of calves, but by *His own* blood, He entered in once into the Holy Place." Where is the superiority of the sacrifice of Christ over the old ones? It is shown in various ways.

First, in that it is *final*. These sacrifices had to be offered morning by morning, day after day, year by year. They had to be repeated again and again. But this sacrifice of Christ was once for all; *εφαπαξ* the word is; it need not ever to be repeated; it is *final*; it is the one to which all the others pointed, and by which alone they had any efficacy. His offering is perfect, sinless, infinite, and also personal; for there is not only finality in it, but personality. All the offerings under the Levitical law were animals. They had no personality; they were unconscious of the use to which they were being put; they were unconsenting victims. But this sacrifice of Christ is conscious and personal. He says of Himself, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." He is not only a sinless sacrifice, but He is a spontaneous and consenting offering. He says, "I lay down my life; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." He was no unconscious, unconsenting creature; but the personality of the Son of God is in this sacrifice. "This commandment have I received of my Father." The very essence of this sacrifice is that it is of the nature of God himself, who thus giveth Himself as our substitute.

Then, again, the superiority of this sacrifice over all others lies in its unity. In the Old Testament times there had to be various sacrifices to represent His work; but now all dualities of typical men and things are swallowed up in His sublime individuality. On the day of atonement one goat was killed, and its blood sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, and then the priest took another, and confessed over it the sins of the people, and it was sent away alive by a fit man into the wilderness. It needed two goats to represent what the Lord did singly by Himself; whilst dying to satisfy the justice of God, He yet at the same time was bearing away alive the sin of the world for ever into the land of forgetfulness.

Besides the finality, the personality, the unity in this sacrifice, there is also Deity in it. The sacrifice was of God himself. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." It is the Father who in Jesus was offering Himself; it is the Son offering Himself to the Father as the substitute for a guilty world. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God;" "Through the Eternal Spirit, He offered Himself without spot to God." His was an offering of perfect sinlessness and perfect Deity. "Without shedding of blood is no remission," but with shedding of this blood there is no exclusion; not one sin is left out from this pardon; "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Is *all* there?" said a dying woman to whom that verse was read. "Yes, all is there," was the answer. "Read it again," she said. And then, when she heard it, she said, "Lay my dying hand on that word *all*, and I die happy." And it is so with us all; we stand before God alone by the propitiation of Jesus; covered with His righteousness; we are saved alone by the blood of our substitute.

3. We also have this third "good thing to come"—"Having obtained eternal redemption for us." Perfect redemption. This redemption is for ever, as we have already noticed in speaking of the perfect offering. What a difference between the old redemption and this! This is "once for all;" that is, it includes past, present, and future, and it is for all people. "It is finished." So our Priest said when His sacrifice was on the altar. It cannot be done again. Oh, the blasphemy of attempting to offer that sacrifice again! Oh, the awful blasphemy of attempting to add to that sacrifice! It is once for ever, and once for all; it avails for all who in all time will accept it. Think of a father buying an estate, and paying down a great price for it, say £10,000, and then his little child comes and says, "Father, here is five shillings to complete the purchase." "Nay, child, thy father has already bought it outright; he has paid down the whole price." Can you conceive it possible? And yet that is what men are doing!

This redemption is perfect also, because it redeems the whole of each one of us, body, soul, and spirit. It is a wondrous redemption! It is no mere outward thing, nor touches only a part, but all of each of us. It is not for a season, but for ever. And it is perfect too, because, while it redeems the whole of the believer, it gives also the whole of the Redeemer to us in return. Our whole is to be given to Him, and a whole Christ is given to us in exchange.

And then it is perfect also, because it is from everlasting: "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The slain substitute is *the* foundation of the world.

II. This, then, being our grand platform and foundation, this the wondrous framework of our salvation, what are the blessed fruits of it? As the framework and scaffolding are vastly superior to those of the old dispensation, so are its fruits and issues equally marvellous in their superiority.

4. The fourth good thing to come is, then, the first superior fruit. Read in verse 14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God!" A purged conscience. That is one of the "good things to come" which Christ hath brought. The purging under the old dispensation was a washing of the flesh. This is the washing of the conscience. That ceremonial cleansing only cleansed from temporal penalties, and from ceremonial defilements and disqualifications; but this washing in the blood of Christ redeems from spiritual stains; it cleanses from

eternal penalties, and also from the moral di- [illegible] which hinder the consecration in the [illegible] to God. "Shall not the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works?" A purged conscience. Do we have it in our experience? Is our conscience so purged that perfect peace is there—that perfect peace is there? Is there perfect access and communion; is there perfect fellowship between God and you? Does the purged conscience make you able to walk in the light, as He is in the light? Is this our experience? This "good thing to come" is for each believer in the whole Church of Christ, even a purged conscience. See that you have it, and nothing short of it.

5. And not only so, but there is a new Covenant now, with a new Mediator. "For this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament." What is the New Covenant? Was not the old "good"? Yes, but this is "better." For under the old dispensation the covenant was "Thou shalt." Under the new redeeming covenant it is "I will." This blessed atoning covenant not only blots out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, but it writes in also. It writes in upon the heart and consciences the law of God by the Spirit. "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their heart." There is this immense practical difference between the old and the new—that He not only blots out, but writes in. It is not a mere passing away of outside guilt, but the spirit of the man is changed, so that he now desires to do the will of God. The Spirit of God enters his heart, and speaks for God, and the spirit of the man yields and places itself on God's side. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of power, of purity, and of performance. It is also a Spirit of fire. At Pentecost He was seen as fire resting on the heads of the disciples, and thus was the New Covenant written in, so that they were completely changed; so changed, that all their shameful cowardice was gone—all their former blindness was gone, and they stood fearless in the power of the Spirit before the murderers of Jesus, and accused them of their guilt. It is a covenant of fire, which empowers by cleansing, and illuminates by consuming; and when we enter into it, we find that in the illuminating of our daily life we must be willing to be consumed by the fire of the Divine Spirit.

Is this New Covenant a real transaction between God and us? Is His covenant really written out in our heart? It is an agreement between God and man whereby He undertakes to carry out His will in us. Have we entered into it?

6. There is a further "good thing to come"—"That they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." *Eternal inheritance.* Under the old law the inheritance was delayed and limited and outward, and it was not by any means perfect, for there were many enemies in it. Under the new law we are introduced into the inheritance at once. "We, which have believed, do enter into rest." We have it at once. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." That rest, which ought to prevail through our whole life, is part of the inheritance. We are at once introduced into it here as part of the eternal inheritance which is reserved in heaven for us who are reserved on earth for it. Let us see that we enjoy it. He [illegible] that we should now begin to possess it. Yes, though all things are ours, let us remember that we should not be children, unless there are gold mines on the estate of our child of God. You may have been long trying to get without finding it out. Some lucky day the [illegible] gold on their home property, there all the time, but they have found it out suddenly. This is but an approximation of what is true for each child of God. There is a gold mine on your property, which is to be dug into by faith, which is to be worked by prayer, and whose riches are inexhaustible! May we realize it, each one! It is "eternal." You cannot be dispossessed of your property, child of God! No circumstance can deprive you of it. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ and the eternal inheritance?"

7. Finally, we come to the seventh "good thing to come"—it is Christ himself. "Christ, being come an High Priest."

We have had already first these three "good things" by way of foundation:—

A Perfect Tabernacle,
A Perfect Offering,
An Eternal Redemption;

and then these three fruits:—

A Purged Conscience,
A New Covenant,
An Eternal Inheritance;

but yet there is something more. The New Mediator is come.

Is not this, indeed, a "good thing"? We have not only a new covenant, but a new Mediator to carry it out, and a perfect High Priest. Oh, if only the priesthood of Christ was understood, there would be an end to all the controversies about priesthood. If it was seen that He Himself is the Priest of His Church, how changed all would be! If Christ were visibly present in this room as Priest, would we for a moment even think of going to any other; could we turn away to any earthly priest? If we realised that Christ the Priest is for ever in the unseen confessional, ready to hear the confessions of the vilest, and with power to absolve and to free from all sin, would it not be an audacity beyond words to pass Him by and go to an earthly priest? Is it conceivable that if I see Christ waiting to receive my confession, I could pass Him by to get from a fellow creature that absolution which he is utterly powerless to give, because he has no power to tell whether I am real or not. But with Him, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God in Christ not only forgives, but frees and cleanses and recommends.

Priests, it is indeed well that our Church should begin every service with confession and absolution. Would that at all times when we approach to God it should be with confession—confession of our unworthiness, our sinfulness, our failure to fulfil all His holy will! And if we are real in confessing all this to Him, let us believe that He is equally real in absolving us. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive."

"Christ being come an High Priest," an unchangeable, ever compassionate High Priest. Then shall we not remember that having Him as our High Priest in a more perfect tabernacle

and having in Him a perfect redemption, then we should continually use Him as our perfect Priest to impart to us these "good things"?

And He is also come as a new Mediator. He has willed to us all His property, His peace, His joy, His love, His life, His glory, His throne. But He has not only made His will in our favour, and died to set His seal to it, to give it force, and to enable it to be executed—for it would be of no avail without death, as a testament is only of force after men are dead—but He has also risen again to be its Mediator, to see to its being administered by Himself on our behalf. In this will you and I, as believers, can claim a sure part, for it is executed in your behalf and mine, and the Mediator of this new will or testament is alive again to administer it. Our Jesus proves it to-day. He stands even now in the Court of Probate in heaven, and He is there to see that every personal legacy He left us goes to the right person. There is no default there, no failure, no fraud, for the Man who drew out the will in my behalf is the Man who administers it for me. It is executed by the Son of God himself. He made the will, and died to give it power; and then He rose to administer it. That is our Mediator of the New Covenant. Is it not in this superior to the Old Covenant? In these days of manifold error and lawlessness, let us hold fast to the simple truth of the Scriptures; let us hold fast to the One Alone, to the full and complete Atonement and satisfaction made for sin by the Substitution, Christ, and to the Fundamental sanctifying of the Holy Ghost. We need it. Look at that one who has just passed away—the Emperor of Germany—a man conspicuous for his courage, his valour, and for his vast and varied empire, and see how he has now died as a child might die, simply resting on the pillow of the Word; as the verse was read to him, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me,"—"That is beautiful," he said.

Let no man deceive us. Let us accept no other Gospel, let us lay no other foundation, let us rest on no other revelation. This Gospel is the only power which God has put forth to draw men to Himself; it satisfies all reasonable questions with no uncertain voice; and it is the full and final revelation we have of the eternal Lord. Cling to the perfect propitiation of Christ; cling to His perfect righteousness for us, which is now covering us before the Father; and cling to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by whom He is working out His righteousness in us to the glory of God.

THE INSPIRATION, AUTHORITY, AND SUFFICIENCY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

By the Rev. C. H. Waller, M.A., Principal of St. John's Hall, Highbury, N.

(Address delivered at the Midway Conference Hall on March 30.)

The inspiration of Scripture I understand to be that it is "God's word written;"* not only the word of man, or even of inspired men. It is this, no doubt. But it is more than this. I believe the Bible to be the written word of God.

Its authority I understand to be that it is God's law for us,—possibly for angels also. "I am a fellow-servant of them that keep the sayings of this book" (Rev. xxii. 9). It contains "things which angels desire to look into" (1 Peter i. 12). And it was certainly law for the Son of God on earth, from the first day of His human existence. That which was law to Him then cannot be less to us now. Holy Scripture is God's law.

And as for the sufficiency of Holy Scripture, it is God's truth. With all reverence we may say that, so far as words can be, the Bible is the way, the truth, and the life for man. Our Saviour said, in a most solemn prayer, "Thy Word is truth" (John xvii. 7). And "the Word of God is alive" (Heb. iv. 12). It is the way also—the way of the tree of life. The written word is all this to those who receive it, as the living Word is to those who receive Him—*i.e.*, to those who believe on His name. There is only one qualifying statement which I would add to this. The Bible, God's written word, is all that I have said, in relation to the living Word, but not apart from Him. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." That which the prophets wrote or spake in the name of the Lord, they spake or wrote as witnesses for Him. He is, in a very real sense, "the Alpha and the Omega" of God's word written. He is the interpretation of it. It is truth and life only in relation to Him.

Thus, then, I believe the inspiration, the authority, and the sufficiency of Holy Scripture; as it belongs to Him and speaks of Him who is the living Word of God, the way and the truth and the life for man.

I must now endeavour to give a reason for this faith. Why do I believe the Bible to be God's word written, God's law for us, God's truth for all? Let me take these three in order. And first, why do I believe the Scriptures to be God's written word?

I know only two ways in which anything that is written can be any one's word. One way is, if he should write it himself, as God wrote the Ten Commandments on the two tables of stone, with His own finger. The other way is, if he should put his name to what is already written, and thereby make it and take it to be his own word. This I believe God has done with all Scripture. This is what I have to show. Now the Holy Scriptures are the Scriptures of the prophets, and the words of the prophets are to be taken as God's words to man. Let us make no mistake about this. Sometimes we are told that the Church gave us the Bible; therefore the Bible is not so much the word of God as the word of the Church. I have had it said to me, when maintaining the inspiration of Holy Scripture, "That is all very well, but you cannot long maintain the infallibility of Scripture without also maintaining the infallibility of the Church." I object to that statement. As long as I live, God helping me, I will maintain the infallibility of the Bible. But I will never maintain the infallibility of the visible Church on earth, or of any section of it. Men say to me, "The Church gave you the Bible, and therefore your Bible cannot be better or truer than the

* Article XX.

Church." Will that reasoning stand? Suppose I say, "My mother gave the Bible, and therefore my mother's word must be as true as the Bible itself." Is that so? The same God who said, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may go well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the earth," said also, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." If my mother gave me the Word of God, does that prove that she made it? or that she has authority to alter or add to any word in it, or even to explain one part of it so that it contradicts the other? If my mother gave me the Bible, does it bind me to take her interpretation of everything the Bible says? No; and whether I say my mother or the Church, makes no kind of difference to the argument. It comes to the same conclusion exactly in either case. My mother did not make the Bible. No more did the Church. The Church never wrote a line of the Bible. The Church never appointed any one to write the Bible, nor a single verse of the Bible. The visible Church of Christ, as a body, has had the same authority in all ages. Suppose the Church wanted to add a verse to the Bible now; could it be done? No. Suppose all the sections of the visible Church in this country should meet together, and after the most solemn prayer and deliberation, should appoint a man to write a letter to the heathen world; would that letter be Scripture? No; never. And it was just the same from the beginning. Could the Church or did the Church ever appoint any man to write a portion of Scripture? No such thing was ever heard of. The prophets of the Old Testament wrote the Old Testament Scriptures, and the apostles and prophets of the New Testament wrote the New Testament Scriptures. And who made the prophets or apostles? None but God himself. Nothing but the personal call of God ever made a prophet. Nothing but the personal call of Christ ever made an apostle. And no one but a prophet or apostle could ever deliver anything to the Church as Scripture, nor could the Church receive anything as Scripture except on the authority of apostles or prophets. No one else ever had authority to deliver anything as God's written word. I shall be asked, "How do you prove this?" I will prove it from the pages of the Bible itself. But before I begin to do so I must meet one objection. I have had it said to me, "If you prove the inspiration of the Bible from the Bible, is not that arguing in a circle?" No; it is not. If the kind of proof which the Bible furnishes were different, it might be. For example, the Koran, which was Mahomet's Bible, simply asserts that he had it from heaven. His assertion is the only ground for that belief. If Holy Scripture did nothing more than assert its inspiration in that sort of way, we might reasonably ask for other proof of it. But that is not the shape of the argument. That is not the kind of proof I mean to draw from the Bible, in order to show its inspiration. That would be a dogma, or doctrinal statement, an assertion, and no more. But the Bible is not only a book of doctrine or teaching, it is a book of history; the oldest and the greatest, and the truest book of history in the world. The history in the Bible extends over a longer period than any other history that has ever been written in one book, and on one authority. And the history in the Bible has been tried and tested in every possible way, and its truth has been fully proved. Over and over again, attempts have been made to show that Bible history is inaccurate, and those attempts have failed. The history in the Bible will bear the closest examination; and, indeed, it requires the closest examination and search, though even in reading it there is commonly enough upon its surface to convince reading the Bible for the first time, that it is supposed to say things that it does not say. Of course, I mean, that, among other things in Bible history, we have the history of how the Bible came to be; not all in one place, as though it were put in on purpose, but in the manner of all Bible history—a fact here and a fact there, so that you cannot read far without finding something about it; and you must look from one to and put passages together if you would learn the whole. And looking the History in the Bible, we have with us the nation to whom God first gave the Bible, a nation to this very day. The first thing I have to show is that the Scriptures are the Scriptures of the prophets. The Bible says so, and the Jews have always said so too. The next thing is that the words of the prophets delivered in the name of God were to be taken as the word of God himself. These two facts can be proved from the history in the Bible, and from the testimony of the Jews. These two together prove inspiration—that the Bible is God's written word.

Our Lord called the Old Testament Scriptures "Moses and the prophets," for Moses and the prophets wrote them all. Let us begin with Moses. In Exodus xvii., he was commanded to write God's word against Amalek in the Book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, who is named for the first time in that place. The names of Joshua and the Bible appear there together—the Name that is above every name, and the Book that is above all books. And the book was written for Joshua, written that it might sink down into his ears. "Write this for a memorial in the book, and put it in the ears of Joshua"; a most striking expression. That passage shows us incidentally that Moses was writing a book at that time which he would leave for Joshua, and not for him only, but for that greater Joshua of whom it is written, "Mars hast Thou formed for me: in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will, O God." There is hardly anything else said of this book which Moses wrote, until we come to Deuteronomy, and there we find the whole account of it perfectly plain. That the book which he wrote was to be the law of God for all Israel is clear from several passages. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the

Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, fear, learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." (Deut. xxxi. 9—13.) It was to be kept in the most sacred hiding-place. And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." (Deut. xxxi. 24—26.) A second copy of the entire book above the written law was taken for judges, or the priests, to be consulted by them. In all doubtful cases the interpretation of the law—that is, the written law—was to be final. "And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: and thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left." (Deut. xvii. 9—11.) The king must write him a copy of it, and read therein all the days of his life (Deut. xvii. 18).

These passages plainly show that the written law of Moses was above the Church of Israel. No man in Church or State could set it aside. Not the magistrate, nor the judge, nor the king in the State of Israel, nor all the priests in the Church of Israel, could enforce anything which was not found in the written law of God. The whole is summed up in one verse in Deut. iv., which applies to them all as a body: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it."

I have said that the Holy Scriptures were from the first the Scriptures of the prophets. I have shown you here that they were not the work of the Church of Israel; that her judges, her elders, her priests, her magistrates, her kings, could only guard, and obey, and administer the law written by Moses, which was the Bible of their day—the first Bible given to mankind. Let me now show you that what the Church of Israel could not do, the prophets could and did do. They wrote the Scriptures and continued the writings of Moses until the Old Testament was complete.

In the same book of Deuteronomy I find, in chap. xviii. verses 15—19, these words: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

This passage is the true basis of the inspiration of all Scripture. The Scriptures are the Scriptures of the prophets, the writings that they have delivered in the name of the Lord, and God calls them in this place "My words"; "My words which he shall speak in my name." That these are not only the words of the living prophet is clear. Hear what Malachi, the last of Old Testament prophets, said in the name of the Lord: "Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers, and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of Hosts thought to do unto us, even according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath He dealt with us." And Isaiah had said before, "All flesh is grass; the grass withereth; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Here, then, I find my reason for believing in the inspiration of Scripture. The Scriptures are, and have been from the beginning, the Scriptures of the prophets. That title, "Moses and the prophets," includes them all—Old Testament prophets before Christ, New Testament prophets with Christ; but Moses and the prophets, and none else. And the prophets were not man's creation, nor the Church's creation, but God's own creation. "It is the Lord that made Moses and Aaron" (1 Sam. xii.); and the Lord that said of all others, "I will raise them up a prophet from the midst of them, like Moses." And the words that Moses and the prophets spoke to us in the name of the Lord I take to be God's words, because He said they should be, and that they must be so taken. That is what I understand by inspiration, neither

some one has. It is God's declaration that the words are His. The Scriptures are the Scriptures of the prophets. The words of the prophets delivered in God's name must be taken as the word of God.

Some of you may, perhaps, wonder that I have not said anything as to how the prophets were inspired; or how the Scriptures of the prophets were handed. I have cut that question on purpose, and I will tell you why. I know nothing at all about it, except what every one knows who can quote two texts of the New Testament. One is found in an Epistle of St. Paul—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16); and the other in an Epistle of St. Peter—"The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). I know those texts, but I can know nothing about them which you may not know also quite as well as I do. And I believe that few things have done more to shake men's faith in Holy Scripture in the present day, than the mischievous habit of discussing the inspiration of the writers of Holy Scripture, and their feelings and thoughts and opinions, their knowledge and their ignorance; as if these things had anything whatever to do with the authority of the Bible. No part of Scripture was ever set forth with more absolute authority than the law of Moses; yet from one end of the law of Moses to the other there is not a syllable about inspiration, except this simple saying, "I will put my words in his mouth," and "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying"—many a thing which Moses wrote for us. But whether Moses wrote the law from dictation, or by recollection, or as a reporter who gives the substance of what he hears; or whether he employed a secretary; whether he had any older books before him when he wrote Genesis, and whether he copied anything, and if so, how much,—we cannot say. On all these matters we are profoundly ignorant. But the law which Moses wrote was made absolutely binding on Joshua and all Israel. God had put His words in Moses' mouth; and whosoever shall not hearken, He will require it of him. That is the sum of the whole matter. The inspiration of Scripture means that *the words of Scripture are to be taken as the words of God*. If it be asked, Why? the answer is, Because God has said so, not because I know how the human authors of Scripture were moved to write. How men were inspired we cannot possibly discover. If we had an inspired writer at work before us, we should know no more of inspiration than we know now; and when his work was done, we should still require Divine authority to make what the man had written part of God's written word. The Bible itself puts the matter as simply as possible: "I will put my words in his [the prophet's] mouth;" "Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

It was, therefore, necessary that the Church of the prophets should have the means of knowing who the prophets were, in their own lifetime. This God gave to His chosen people in all ages. He never raised up prophets to deliver any Scripture except in that one nation.* The Jews were thoroughly familiar with the fact. The rule by which to discern the prophets was given them in Deut. xviii. 21, 22. Whether the prophets did miracles or not, made no difference (see John x. 41, 42). It was not left to the Christian Church to make the distinction between prophets and other men. It was a simple question of fact and evidence, to be decided in a man's lifetime, whether he was a prophet of the Lord, and whether he had delivered anything to the Church of Israel as written in the name of the Lord. So manifest was this distinction between the writings so delivered and other writings, and the men who delivered them and other men, that neither the Church of the Old Testament nor the Church of the New Testament has preserved the record of anything like debate upon the question. A large part of the Old Testament is anonymous, so far as we are concerned. Who wrote Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Esther, Job? We may guess, but we do not know. Who compiled the Psalms we know not. And in the New Testament the case is stranger still. The Gospels of St. Matthew, and St. Mark, and St. Luke do not contain the signatures of their authors. The Epistle to the Hebrews is anonymous. The Acts of the Apostles evidently comes from the same hand as the third Gospel, but the author has not signed his name. St. Paul quotes that very Gospel as Scripture. St. Peter calls all St. Paul's Epistles Scriptures. They were delivered as Scripture to the Church by the apostles and prophets of the New Testament; otherwise they could not have been received; and, being Scriptures of the prophets, they must be taken as God's written word.

From the fact that Holy Scripture is God's word written, we pass easily to its authority. It is God's law. So it was delivered to Joshua, the first leader of God's chosen people, who even had to govern himself by a written book. Hear God's charge to Joshua at the beginning of his public life (i. 8): "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night." This passage in Joshua has a twofold application. It is not only God's charge to Joshua, but it forms the introduction to the second part of the Old Testament. Our Saviour described the Old Testament as consisting of three parts, "the law, the prophets, and the Psalms." The first of these—the law—is the name of the five books of Moses. The prophets begin with Joshua, who "wrote in the Book of the Law of God;" and the very first sentences of the prophets give to the existing Scripture the name and the authority of law. The same thing appears also in the beginning of the third portion. The 1st Psalm is not only the introduction to the Psalter, it begins the third division of the Old Testament, the Scriptures or holy writings, and it begins with a benediction of the man who reverently obeys the earlier Scriptures and fulfils the charge to Joshua, whose "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." Thus the three divisions of the Old Testament Scripture—law, prophets, Psalms—alike have the authority of the law.

But the great proof of this authority is the acknowledgment of the Scripture as law by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. From first to last, the Scriptures were the rule of His life and teaching. From the day when He three times

* St. Luke is the only Gentile writer whom we know of in Scripture, and St. Luke's gospel comes to us under Jewish authority, being indorsed by St. Paul.

answered Satan with "It is written," until the day when He expounded to the disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. He made it clear that the written word of God had the authority of law for Him. Whenever He was attacked by Scribes or Pharisees He turned to the Scriptures: "It is written;" "Have ye not read?" "The Scripture cannot be broken." And it was not to the books of Moses only that He gave the authority of law. He treated all Scripture alike. Twice over He cites the Psalms in the same way. "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?" "This cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Both these sayings are from the Psalms. In the same way He treats the prophets. "All the prophets and the law prophesied"—*i.e.*, they all spoke for God. The law and the prophets were until John; but it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one title of the law to fail. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all things are done."

In one passage our Lord cites the same Scripture as the saying of Moses, as God's commandment, and as the word of God. He only refers to four writers of the Old Testament by name, but He constantly refers to that which is written, "That the Scripture may be fulfilled." I have myself collected and put together all our Lord's references to Scripture, and the same thing has, I believe, been done by many, and, therefore, I will not allude to them further now.

Let me just remind you, in passing, that the authority of all law whatever (not only of Scripture) resides in the words. Our laws are now made by Act of Parliament. Every one knows how. First the law is drafted in the form of a Bill, and then it is brought in and proposed and discussed by the House, and amended and reported; and when both Houses have agreed to it, it goes up to the Sovereign. The assent of the Sovereign makes it law. When that is once done, all that the Judges have to do is to construe and apply the words of the Act. And the law is as much the inspired word of the ruling power as it would have been if Nebuchadnezzar himself had written it at Babylon with his own hand. Can you imagine any one being so foolish as to try to upset the law because some part of it came from an amendment proposed by a weak member of Parliament—a foolish man? What Judge would listen to a piece of that sort? He would say, "I have nothing to do with that; the Act is law, and I have to administer it." So with Holy Scripture. Once delivered to the Church as the word of a prophet in the name of the Lord, it becomes God's word and God's law. No question that is now raised as to the writing of it can shelve the authority of Scripture in the very least. We are left, therefore, with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments until Christ comes again. The Scriptures were law to Him and to His apostles; they are law even to angels. What can ever supersede them for us?

A few words on the sufficiency of Holy Scripture must bring my observations to a close. I think that by far the most remarkable proof of their sufficiency is to be found in what happened on the first Easter, the day our Lord rose from the dead. On that day He walked with two disciples to Emmaus, and restrained their eyes from recognising Him while He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. The living Word concealed Himself, for the time, behind the written word. It was enough for them. It was as much as their minds could contain, to receive the Christ of Holy Scripture, without even thinking that He who showed them the Christ of Scripture was the living Christ himself. That which the living, but unseen, Christ did for them, the Holy Spirit of Christ does for those who search the Scriptures now. It is enough for us at present if we see Him in the Scriptures by the guidance of Him whom we cannot see—I mean the Holy Spirit. We need no other human guide. If "the anointing that ye have received of Him abideth in you, ye need not that any man teach you. But the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." If the Holy Scripture, together with that holy Anointing, the unction of Him who spoke by the prophets, is not sufficient, I know not what is. And that brings me naturally to the last thing I have to say. In the defence of the Gospel, and of the fundamental truths of the Gospel, the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. We have this with us, and if we can but handle it, it will suffice. Do not suppose that the Word of God is not strong enough to meet the word of man. Only "he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" If men err, and fail to meet error, it is because they know not the Scripture, not because any man can know better than the Scripture, or because the Scripture can be superseded, or go out of date. For myself, I hold, with old John Bunyan, the opinion expressed in the words of Greatheart when he asked the man who was called Valiant-for-Truth, "Let me see thy sword." So he showed it him. And when he had taken it in his hand and looked thereon awhile, he said, "Ha! It is a right Jerusalem blade." And Valiant-for-Truth answered, that so it was. And he was right. Let a man have one of those blades, with a hand to wield it, and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel with it. He need not fear its holding, if he can but tell how to lay on. Its edge will never blunt. It will cut flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all. It is God's word written; it is God's law; and it is enough for every believer, and for every teacher, until the Lord comes again.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER.

By the Rev. Philip Colclough, Congregational Church, Birmingham.

(*Address delivered at Midway Conference Hall on March 30.*)

To a true believer the propitiation offered to God by our Lord Jesus Christ appears of inestimable value, owing to the spotless righteousness of Him who became our Sin-bearer, bearing away in His holy suffering upon the cross the punishment due to sinners.

Such a believer realizes at that crisis, however, only a deeper sense of the crumbling sinfulness of sin, while he avails himself of the provision made there for relieve him of sin's penalty. And while he does so he finds himself, though washed and made clean, still in a sinful state; some weakness is left in him responsive to temptation; some foolishness weaves into opinion himself; he is consciously affected by hearing; a taint detected from words he or thought with him; added to this, sin is his own pain this but let some sense, and sin is his personal consciousness. It all too palpable. In the moment of his happy and strong illumination he has seen that Christ stands a complete atonement for his sins for all; but now he is weak and confused, and painfully aware that a consciousness, consciousness would cannot understand his religion, and that he can only help the world to Christ by being himself complete in righteousness.

Such a believer gives himself more pointedly to acts of obedience; but while these accomplish much, they do not accomplish all; they satisfy others, perhaps, but not the enlightened man himself. The experience of the very best of men goes to show that acts of obedience do not secure the seal of peace with God. The fact is universal, the reason is not far to find. Self-confidence is not a characteristic of a regenerate heart; it is found rather more fully developed in the unbeliever in the dark than in the believer walking in the light. The purest spirits have the clearest insight into motives, and detect flaws which destroy self-complacency in their best acts of obedience. They consequently confess:

"The best obedience of my hands
Dares not appear before Thy throne."

Again, acts of obedience often follow in the believer a period of deep conviction and contrition, and who can tell that any present obedience is permanent? If acts of obedience could satisfy conscience, they would still require the test of time, and till that test is satisfied, assurance resting upon obedience alone is disturbed and incomplete. It is here that the Lord Jesus Christ accepted as the believer's righteousness meets all his longing and his need.

But no doctrine can provide us with any real rest unless we receive it from God. Observation will not suffice, tradition and reason are insufficient; tradition fails; we need straight paths; it is heavenwards we deplore, and we don't want to be put out of joint by another fall. What we do want, then, is doctrine that proceeds plainly, unmistakably, out of God's Word.

Faith in the justifying Saviour does not want to stop short with the appropriation of His work finished on the cross; it wants to go on to appropriate the righteousness of One who is "risen for our justification;" and lo! the word of the Lord commands us to "go forward," witnessing with our consciences as it does that, "if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life."

Enough fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus when on earth to raise great expectations of the activity and scope of His righteousness in the accomplishment of His divine direction.

To this testimony of His lips more was added by the risen Lord, through the pens of inspired men. Let us look at both these infallible records.

It is admitted there is nothing which we always more like the image of Christ as beholding Him. Our Lord emphasized the fact that He would not leave His disciples orphans, saying, "Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more, but ye behold me; because I live, ye shall live also." The way in which this glorious purpose was to be accomplished, and the living righteous Lord was to live in believers, and believers alive to live in Him and in partakers of His righteousness, was most explicitly stated and our Lord disclosed. He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go I will send Him unto you."

Very emphatic was our Lord about the kind of work the Comforter was to do for us: "The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. He shall glorify me, for He shall take of mine and show it unto you."

In this forty days after His resurrection our Lord, present with His disciples, renewed and confirmed all this promise of help, saying (and you will note that He no longer distinguishes by name between Himself and the Comforter), "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth; go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you; and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Christ present with believers must do more to make and keep them right than all else beside; it is when we follow Him at too great a distance we faint and fall. In Him our righteousness is not merely defensive, it becomes aggressive.

Let us pass on from the words falling from the lips of the Master to those reaching us by means of the pens of His inspired scribes. From these we learn not merely that Christ still lives and has not forgotten believers, but that "He ever liveth to make intercession for them;" that "He ascended into heaven itself now to appear before the face of God for us." If He came to earth that we "might have life," He is living now in such a way that we may have life "more abundantly." Paul exhorts the believers at Rome to "be joined to Him who was raised from the dead." Wherefore? "That we might bring forth fruit unto God."

The figures of the Vine and its branches, of the living body with its living Head, are lost upon us if they do not show us how the living Lord forms substantial union with believers, productive of vital and progressive qualities, and how that is all derived from Him.

How clear it all becomes that the Divine plan of dealing with man, lost through the fall, does not work out in this event! Human inventions regretfully leave great schemes incomplete; one begins, others come after, and improve the imperfect design that has been dropped by those who could not finish it. God never leaves any part of His work incomplete. He always sees the end from the beginning.

Hold in the outline presented in these words, "Whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be

conformed to the image of His Son." Do you want to see that sketch a little more filled in? We read, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." We are weak! Where is our strength to walk? One goes before us saying, "I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us." The living Lord is in His workshop still, and we are His workmanship. It is the tenderness and skill of His hand upon the potter's wheel we have to consider. It is the perfection afforded in His loving will we have to rely upon.

"Praise be Thine,
I see the whole design,
I who saw power see now love perfect too;
Perfect I call Thy plan,
Thanks that I was a man,
Make, re-make, complete!
I trust what Thou shalt do."

The righteousness of Christ is a protection for life in Christ. The least of these little ones that believe in Him may thrive under it.

Thus Daniel lived for fifty years in a most corrupt court. Thus three Hebrew youths walked in a fiery furnace—the form of that Fourth with them. Thus Nehemiah and Ezra grew able as giants for splendid service in most troublous times. Thus ever since saintship has been made possible in all the worst ages of the world.

May not we, then, who can turn in thought to Bethlehem and Capernaum, and Bethany, and Olivet, may not we rest under His shadow with great delight, find the joy of the Lord our strength, and learn to sing:

"Jesus, Thy robe of righteousness
My beauty is, my glorious dress"?

It only remains to suggest some ways in which believers may most surely avail themselves of the provided righteousness of the Lord Jesus.

Thoughtful, affectionate acquaintance with the Word of the Lord is one way, reading it in the waiting attitude with the upward look, handling it with the reverent touch of the [illegible] which knows it to be the golden connecting link with the object of our supreme affection, not leaving it only to the remorseless analysis of the hostile critic. And as this Word contains farewell directions and the world-charter of all nations—"Lo, I am with you alway"—we shall not hesitate to enter the [illegible] presence by engaging in devoted foreign mission service, bringing Christ's kingdom in, winning the whole world for Him. A recluse, if there secluded, will not prove very much of the righteousness of Christ till he goes forth, and then, as he begins to do "the will of the Lord," he will know more of the "doctrine."

Another such way in which we speedily avail ourselves of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus is by the direct and immediate confession to Him of every transgression and every failure we become conscious of in daily life. Let every detected fault, however detected—every failure in duty—every accusation of conscience—every recrudescence of clinging, sadly besetting sin be taken at once by us into the light of His countenance, and not only shall we find pardon, but such heart-healing in His righteousness that the very roots of evil will wither in the Holy Presence to which we flee, away from the darkness which solicits us.

Let us be content to look at Jesus, to gaze on Christ, to see Jesus, to press on, living for His glory, walking in His ways, content to leave not only the profession of any attainment, but even the consciousness of it, till we awake in His presence, and know that we are "for ever with the Lord."

"ME AND MY WORDS."

By the Rev. FRANK H. WHITE, of the Talbot Tabernacle, Notting Hill.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall on March 21.)

This kind of address best suited to a prayer meeting is a heart exhortation, and such I desire, by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, to give you this afternoon. My aim now is simply to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance—to plead with your hearts—to put myself before the Master, if haply He might speak through my poor lips. If *He* but speak we shall be blessed indeed, not else. Beloved friends, try and realise the actual presence of Christ. Don't be put off with a poor wordy speaker. Do not consent to any substitute for the Lord himself. You may have the sweetest songs, the most compelling speakers, the grandest choruses, and the latest appliances, but if you lack Him, what are all, what is any of them? The time was when the thousand and one accessories which seem nowadays to be so needful for carrying on the work of the Gospel had no existence; yet our fathers were willing to want them. There was one thing, however, they were not content to be without, and that was the Lord's presence; hence the power and blessing that accompanied their ministry. Says John Livingstone of the covenanting Bruce, "Upon one occasion I went into Edinburgh to see him in company with the laird of Bonnington. When we called at eight in the morning, he told us he was not inclined for company. On being urged to say why, he replied, that when he went to bed he had a good measure of the Lord's presence, but that he had wrestled for about an hour or two before we came, and had not yet got access."

Oh, my fellow Christian workers, have we got access? I do not mean into the fellowship of a church, or even into a pulpit, or into the ranks of a Sunday-school teacher, but into His very presence. I wonder how many of us have any right to be where we are. What if the great Master of assemblies were to issue an edict that no professed servant of His was to enter upon his or her service next Lord's-day who was not full of the Holy Ghost, who did not answer to that description of a true servant in the Second Epistle of Timothy, who was not "a vessel meet for the Master's use"? In other words, that no unconsecrated man or woman (the Lord himself being the Judge) was to teach, or preach, or

with, or engage in any one of the manifold services of the day. How many of us would be employed? Yet of what use are we if we are not anointed with the Holy Spirit? If our Lord himself needed this anointing in order to preach His own Gospel, how much more do we! Of what avail is it that we are earnest, or eloquent, or sensible, or even so well equipped in every respect, if we are not anointed with the Holy Ghost? God forbid that we should limit the Holy One of Israel, that we should say that He cannot use even an unregenerate man, or that He shall not, in spite of our cold heartedness and backsliding, speak by us even though we lack this anointing! "He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." He is sovereign, and "greater than man," and "giveth not account of any of His matters."

Yet I believe with that holy man of God, Robert McCheyne, when in a letter to the apostolic Burns, speaking of the great desire he had for a widespread revival among the masses of the ungodly, he wrote: "I am deepened in the conviction that if we are to be used of God, we must be purified from all filthiness of flesh and spirit." And, again, "Speak for eternity, but above all cultivate your own spirit. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clean and your heart full of God's Spirit is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin." Oh, brethren and sisters, let us away with all substitutes for the presence and power of the Spirit of God. If we have not brought Christ here with us to-day, I trust that He has brought us, and that every one in this large audience will realise in his and her own soul the earnest of a blessed and widespread spiritual revival. This will more than anything else promote the object of these meetings; it will make the Word of God more supreme with us, and lead us to try ourselves and our teachings by it, and by it alone. Then we shall need no elaborate arguments to prove the close and intimate connection between spiritual life and the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel of Christ. "Take heed to yourselves and to the doctrine," wrote Paul to Timothy; "continue in them, for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. iv. 16).

Now to the Scripture which has started these reflections. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." These are His (Christ's) own words, and, taken pure and simple as they stand, should be enough, even though I may be unable to say a word upon them. Oh, let them abide with us till the end of our days. But before they can do this, they must have an entrance. Let us, therefore, one and all open our hearts to them at this moment; let each of us say, "Lord, here is at least one heart which throws wide open its doors to this gracious word of Thine."

Notice, there are two abiding-places spoken of. First, there is the Saviour himself, in whom, if we are to be successful pleaders and teachers and workers, we must take up our abode—not lodge for a little, but *permanently abide*, no more to go out. Is this not as we would have it? Are we not as the Hebrew slave who in the seventh year was at liberty to "go out free" from his lord, but of his own will chose to remain? So deeply did he love his master that he could not leave him; freedom in such a case would be to him the worst bondage. So with us and our Lord. To be a bond-slave to such a Master is the sweetest freedom. Our cry is:

"My Master, lead me to the door;
Pierce this new willing ear once more
Thy bondsmen are freedom; let me stay,
With Thee to toil, endure, obey."

"Never is it well with me," said old John Berridge, "but when I am at home with Jesus."

But there is another abiding-place, and that is the disciple's heart. And who is to live here? In verse 4 of this chapter we read, "Abide in me, and I in you." Here fruitfulness is declared to be dependent upon our hearts becoming the dwelling-place of the Lord himself. He is to sit on the throne of our affections. But in the verse before us it is not Christ, but His words which are to abide in us. In both verses, Christ is the abiding-place for His people; but in our text, the 7th verse, it is not the Lord who is the abider, but His words. This is an important distinction, one that bears very closely on the object of these meetings. It teaches us, as do very many other Scriptures that I shall endeavour to bring to your notice, that it is not enough that we should give room in our hearts to the Lord himself, but that we should welcome His words also. It condemns at once the thought that so many in this day are indulging, that we can be loyal to the one and at the same time be unfaithful to the other; that we can receive Him in all the greatness and graciousness of His person, and yet lightly esteem His precepts (Psa. cxix. 28); that we can own Him as King and Priest, and yet refuse to sit at His feet as Prophet and Teacher, welcome Him as our salvation and strength, and not be subject to Him as the Word of God.

What sort of loyalty would that be counted to the speechless Emperor of all the Germans which, while professing to honour his person, to welcome him to his throne, despised and set at nought his proclamations? No, it is not "if ye abide in *me*" only, but if "my *words* abide in you." In the preceding chapter, verse 23, Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words;" and, again, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." So, in verse 21, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." How most exactly this agrees with the teaching of the beloved Apostle in his Epistles, "Hereby we do know that we know Him" (*i.e.*, with an intimate experimental knowledge, for such the Word expresses), "if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth" (one ancient reading has "truth of God") "is not in him; but whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." "Hereby know we that we are in Him" (1 John ii. 3-5). "Here is the test," as one hath well said, "by which to distinguish morbid religionism or mere contentious orthodoxy from true religion." Again, this is His commandment, that we should "believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment. And he that keepeth His commandments [God the Father's], he it is that dwelleth in Him, and He in him, and hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John iii. 22, 24). In chapter v. 3 we read, "This

is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." So also in 2 John 6, showing that the commandments of the Father and the commandments of the Son are identical—the words of Christ and the words of God. Thus, speaking of Jesus, the Baptist cried in the wilderness of Judea, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God" (John iii. 34).

In John xii. 48, Christ declares that at the judgment day, rejection of His words will be deemed equivalent to a rejection of Himself. "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath One that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." So in Mark viii. 38—"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Again—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my *words* shall not pass away." "There are men foolish enough to say," writes Stier, "heaven and earth will never pass away, but the words of Christ will in course of time."

You will note, it is *His words*—His definite sayings—His articulate teachings. Elsewhere He speaks of His word, "He that heareth my word." "If ye continue in my *word*, then are ye my disciples indeed." "Ye seek to kill me because my word hath no place in you." Because the Jews lightly esteemed the words of Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures, they became the murderers of their Messiah. So now, to despise the words of Christ is to crucify Him afresh. He does not then speak of His word only, His one indivisible word in the verse before us, but of His *words*—not His doctrine, as elsewhere, but of His several teachings which make up what the beloved Apostle calls the "doctrine of the Christ," and which, if a man transgress, go beyond and abide not therein, "he hath not God." Here is progress, but it is progress away from God, because it is going onward from the teaching of Christ. It is in truth *retrogression*, a going back. Against such let us warn one another this afternoon.

Do you ask where these words are in which we are to abide? With the Bible in your hand, rather ask where they are not. It is true that "at sundry times, and in divers manners," God "spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," whilst "in these last days He hath spoken to us by His Son," yet the "words of Christ" are not confined to the four gospels, but sparkle in every page of the inspired volume. Not only did Old Testament "saints rejoice to see His day" (John viii. 5, 6), and to bear His "reproach" (Heb. xi. 26), but they heard also the voice of Him who himself said, "Before Abraham was I am." If not in the same sense and degree, yet they heard the "words of Christ." In John v. 46 our Lord identifies His words and Moses' writings, and declares that the belief of the one is incompatible with the disbelief of the other, implying, I think, not only that Moses wrote of Him, but that *He* wrote *through Moses*. Of the prophets that prophesied of the grace that was to come to us New Testament sinners, we are told that it was the Spirit of Christ in them which did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. This agrees with that word in the Revelation, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

Certainly he has not read aright who has not heard the greater David, not only spoken of, but speak in the Psalms. Take, for example, the Fortieth Psalm, where He cries, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened. . . . Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." Hear Him again, directly speaking through the prophet Isaiah, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Then there are His direct utterances as the ascended Head of the Church, as recorded in the last book of the sacred Canon, appended to which is the solemn warning, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Again, we have His "words" as they fell, in His name, from the lips and pen of His apostles, to whom, according to promise, He had sent the Comforter to bring to their remembrance all that He had told them when on earth.

If the apostles' words had not been the words of Christ, they could scarcely have said, "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John iv. 6); or "We have received not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, which things we speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Again, "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 13, 14). Nor could the Lord himself have said of the apostles, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Neither would He have said to the Father, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me" (John xvii. 8). Nor again would the Apostle Paul have dared to write, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Yes, I have no doubt that in the words of the apostles we have the "words of Christ." His words in their fullest sense are, of course, to be found in the gospels which contain the direct utterances of the Son of God. This it is that makes the testimony of the Evangelists so precious: it contains His wonderful and wonder-working words, the words of Him who "spake as never man spake;" wonderful indeed, winning their way into our poor hearts, and wooing us from sin, the world, and ourselves—words as great and glorious as they are *gracious*—"life-words" indeed—"Spirit and life" He called them, and this the first disciples felt and confessed them to be; for when the Lord appealed to the twelve, "Will ye also go away? Will ye, because of the harshness of some of my sayings, go back and walk no more with me?" Peter, as spokesman for all the rest—grand old Peter, with all his blunderings and backslidings, he was sound at the core in the faith of the Gospel—"Lord," he cried, "to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of *eternal life*." Oh, brethren, what say we? Shall *we* go away? Shall we give up the words of Christ? What is left to us if we do? Some of them may, by their very majesty and profundity, stagger us, but give them up, never, never, for in so doing we shall be giving Him up who spake them, and then where are we? True, as the time of the end draws on, as we have been warned by our dear brother in the chair, we may be in the

minority, but let us hold fast that which we have received. More than ever let His words abide in us—all His words, not some of them only, but all, for all are "faithful and true." Some, especially those which relate to the future, are terrible, but tender or terrible, they are all true; therefore let us hold them fast—hold them fast, not only for the grace of salvation, but for the guidance in every day life, the government of our whole being, and the girding of ourselves for the battle against sin and error, to which He is so loudly calling us just now.

Thus fully me. I pour up all my heart in this matter with seven words of earnest entreaty, and in them I speak especially to believers, to those who acknowledge and recognize the "words of Christ;" to those, as His sheep, have heard and are still hearing His voice.

1. *Receive them meekly.* Not idly, yet meekly; not as fools, but as wise men and women.

2. *Reverence them reverently and patiently.* Stand in awe of them; they are the words of the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Counsellor. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him who speaketh from heaven."

3. *Heed them highly.* Protest earnestly against the endeavours which are being made to lower them to the level of the words of mere sinful men, or even to the words of an angel.

4. *Obey them instantly and constantly.* In a word, *keep them.* Remember it is not enough to have them. This may be but our condemnation. *We must obey them.* Here is our glory, and our gladness too, to show that to us they are "not grievous, but pleasant"—"sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

5. *Express them plainly and fully.* Not by the lip only, but in the life. Be not content to wear the golden bells of a sound profession, but take care your hourly walk is fringed also with the pomegranates of a holy practice.

6. *Scatter them widely and hopefully.* The world needs them; they are "spirit and life"—the very "power of God unto salvation."

7. *Contend for them earnestly and lovingly.* Remember we are set for the defence as well as the propagation of the Gospel.

The last time I was in this building was the occasion of a marriage. Luther used to say he was "married" to the Epistle to the Galatians—it was his Catharina Bora. We are married, not to the Epistle to the Galatians only, but to all the words of this Book; let us, like Luther, be willing rather to lose life and limb than give up a single fraction of the "precious words of God." When that Swedish prince the other day was joined to the lady for the love of whom he was willing to resign all possible rights to the throne, he placed a ring on the velvet cushion before the minister, and taking his bride by the hand, said, "I take thee to be my lawful wife for good times and for bad times." So say we of the "words" of Christ—not only of the Christ whose words they are, but of the words of Christ—"We do this day take them to be our lawful wife for good times and for bad times." Let us not be like Bunyan's "By-ends," who boasted that he always had the "wind to favour, in his judgment, with the present way of the times, whatever it was." While Prince Omar was being married he had to lay aside his sword, but when the ceremony was over his brother buckled it on again, on the supposition that he would need it to defend his wife. It was but a supposition. But it is not so with us. We do need, not only to take the sword, but use it, in defence of the Book. Oh, let us beware, lest, while friendly to truth, we are wanting in unfriendliness to error. Necessity is laid upon us to contend for the "faith once delivered to the saints," and that right earnestly. Only let us remember it is by the Word that we conquer for the Word. Our weapons are not carnal, yet are they "mighty to the pulling down of strongholds of Satan, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Amen and Amen.

THE ENTRANCE OF SIN INTO THE WORLD: ITS EXTENT AND CONSEQUENCES.

By the Rev. H. R. Brooks, Bromley, Kent.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, on March 31.)

Although my subject is unattractive, yet it is of the utmost importance in relation to the glorious truths of the Gospel. When the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on earth and entered on His public ministry, it was arranged in God's counsels that there should precede Him a ministration of proclamation of sin. This was by John the Baptist, who arose to bring the people to a sense of sin, and to proclaim to them his great message, "Repent ye." Multitudes flocked to him, and were baptized, "confessing their sins." In the midst, then, of those professing to take the place of sinners the Lord Jesus Christ appeared. John shrank from baptizing Him, because baptism implied sin and its washing away. However, at His word, he did baptize Jesus, and then it was that testimony was borne to Him from above, and the Holy Ghost came down on Him like a dove, and a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son." Therefore it was in connection with testimony to sin that the Son of God appeared amongst men as a Saviour.

Now, turning to this book, I do not suppose you get anywhere clearer testimony to the glorious truths of the Gospel than in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and yet that very epistle begins (in its 1st, 2nd, and part of the 3rd chapters) with dark revelations of the true nature of sin. Hence the importance of true views concerning sin. We must set forth this truth, however unpopular and repulsive it may be. And it is so especially in these times, when amongst many existing causes for departure from the faith there is none more potent than ignorance with regard to sin. Vast numbers have fallen into the error of confounding sin with overt and open acts of sin.

Turning then to the Word, we find, "Sin is the transgression of the law," or, as it might be

better rendered, "Sin is unconformity to the law." But then let us ask, what is that law to which sin is unconformity? It is not the law of society, nor of public opinion, but the law of God. This law, as shown in the two great commandments or the Ten Commandments, sets forth God's claims on us as His creatures. The two great claims are perfect love to God and man. The first is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The second is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." That is what none of us do. We do not and have not kept this law, and all unconformity to the law is sin. What we need in approaching such a subject as this is to give up shallow views of sin, as if it were thereby thinking little of that commandment, and to embrace God's definition as more real and comprehensive. Thus each of us must feel that we are brought in guilty before God.

But there is one other point here. Even if we see the Scripture truth as to the nature of sin, we still need a teacher more than man to bring it home to our hearts and consciences. I daresay you remember the story of the conversion of that eminent Christian, Cæsar Malan. There came to Geneva a well-known Scotch evangelist, who endeavoured to get at the students of theology in order to teach them Christian truth. He began with the doctrine of sin, and took them to Rom. iii., and read those solemn passages, making the matter very clear to convince the understanding. At the close of the Bible reading, a young man came to him and said, "I see it, I see it now." The evangelist replied, "You see it *there* (in the Bible), but do you see it *here* (in the heart)?" The word went to the young man's (Malan's) heart, sent him to his knees, and he found sin not only in the Word of God, but in himself. This was the means of his conversion, and you know how useful he became. Therefore, while Scripture sets before us a clear definition of what sin is, we yet need the Spirit of God to convince us of sin.

In dealing with sin I have to speak of its entrance, its extent, and its consequences. If you turn to a passage in the Word of God (Rom. v. 12) you find all three set forth: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." There is a slight difference in the Revised Version, which reads, "As through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men; for that all sinned." Mark three things in this passage: 1st, the unity of the source, "by one man;" 2nd, the universality of the extent, "all have sinned;" 3rd, the universality of the result, "death by sin," "death passed unto all men." It is very important to see these three things; that this great evil of which we speak comes from one source, is of universal extent, and is startling in its consequences.

But the entrance of sin into the world is here brought before us in connection with another glorious truth—the entrance of righteousness, "by the righteousness of One." In treating of the subject of sin, we must ever remember we gain immensely in our appreciation of God's wonderful provision for the putting away of sin. We have in Jesus Christ that which meets all. Thus, if we have on the one side one man as the source of sin, we have on the other side one Man meeting God's claims of righteousness. If on the one hand sin extends to the whole race of which Adam was the head, on the other hand righteousness extends to the whole race of whom the "second Man the Lord from heaven," is the Head. And if on the one hand we see the result of sin in bringing all unto death, we see on the other hand the blessed righteousness from the one Head making all who believe heirs of eternal life. Hence we must not be afraid to look into the depths of this evil—sin in its source, extent, and consequences.

Nor do we need much evidence on this subject. We are conscious living witnesses of the extent of sin, and wide as have been the discoveries of geographical exploration, there has never yet been found in any part of the world one man, however secluded, exempt from this terrible scourge of sin.

Notice also the Word of God brings before us the solemn doctrine of sin in order to sound a note of warning as to the danger in which we are as sinners. It is sometimes said of those who venture to speak as our Lord does in Matt. xxv. of everlasting punishment, that they take pleasure in gloating over the miseries of others. But is it not kindest—if we are assured from the Word that such things await the impenitent—that we should faithfully warn those in danger rather than shrink from so doing because it is unpleasant? There is a prohibition in Lev. ii. against burning with any meat offering to the Lord "leaven or honey." Leaven is the symbol of evil, and that prohibition is easy to understand. But why should honey be prohibited? It is the symbol of the suitability and sweetness of human nature, which when it comes into collision with God's revealed truth is nothing better than corruption. Therefore we must set aside our natural feelings, and when we find solemn declarations as to the awful judgment of sin it becomes us to bow to them and receive them, because God has caused them to be written.

Moreover, we are also taught in Rom. v. that "by one man sin entered into the world," and "death by sin," and so "death passed through unto all men." This seems to refer to Adam's sin as the sin of the race; in that sin he, as the head of mankind, sinned, and all sinned in him. And as the sin passed unto all, so also the consequences come upon all. Mark *all*, and this is emphatical as meaning even "those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Through him death passed unto all men, hence all are born in a state of death, and this death is not merely that of the body. The Lord said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" yet Adam did not die as to the body until nearly a thousand years after. The day he sinned spiritual death took place, and in that state we are born, and in it we live, as those "dead in trespasses and sins." Hence the results of sin we see around us. All the ruin and wrong, the misery and sighing, the disease and death which fill the world are but part and parcel of the spiritual death in which we all are involved by Adam's sin.

But still more dire consequences are involved. Scripture goes on to speak of something more fearful still. In Rev. ii. 11 we read of the "second death," of which the overcomers shall

not be hurt. That is not annihilation; there would be no reason to tell people they should not be hurt of that. Then in chapter xx., in relation to the first resurrection, we are told that "on such the second death has no power." And further on it is identified with the terrible "lake of fire," and in the following chapter we have the description of those doomed to this awful judgment, with the emphatic words, "this is the second death." We must leave these solemn passages to speak for themselves. They set before us that dread consequence of sin, that man may flee from the wrath to come.

Now we all feel that deliverance from sin and the righteousness God has provided are far more attractive subjects than that of sin. But, nevertheless it is by understanding something of this subject, we are better prepared to appreciate the propitiation for sin, and to value it. Thus in setting forth testimony to fundamental truth we feel we must go back to those old truths that lie at the foundation of the whole matter. But, while making these known, we rejoice more and more to tell of a Saviour of sinners, of a sacrifice for sin, of the propitiation God has made in the person and work of His well-beloved Son.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PROPITIATION FOR SIN.

By the Rev. Talbot Greaves, M.A., Vicar of Clifton.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, on March 21.)

When you contemplate the holy government of God two great mysteries confront you: one, the prevalence of sin, the fallen state of man; the other, the redemption of man. I assume the first as already fully dealt with, assuming also that in the nature of things punishment must follow sin, for I cannot regard salvation as something that must come to all men; I regard it as a great thing, and no easy, facile work. Assuming, then, the first, I pass on to the second: How shall man escape from the just consequences of his sin? The Scripture answer is that given in Rom. iii., where the Apostle says, "Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God . . . that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." I ask your attention for a few moments to two questions: first of all, "Why is a propitiation for sin needed?" and secondly, "What is required in propitiation for sin?"

First, then, why is a propitiation for sin needed? It is not needed to procure for us the love of God. Socinians charge us with teaching that to the death of Christ we owe the love of the Father. They charge us with representing the Father with a horrible Siberian aspect, as a wild beast thirsting for blood.

It is a wicked and false libel. We represent the Father as eternally loving His creatures and sending His Son to open a way to reconcile them to Himself. Many love to misrepresent the great doctrine of the Atonement. But, so far from being indebted to Christ for the love of the Father, we are indebted to the Father for the death of Christ. The death of Christ was not intended to compel an angry Judge to forgive us, but to permit that righteous Judge to righteously pardon us. "God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." We entreat you, therefore, not to allow some lingering fear that, notwithstanding the atonement of Christ, there is yet enmity in the heart of God against you to keep you back from God. Believe that He loves you, and because He loves you, sent His Son to be the propitiation for your sins. Well then, if propitiation be not needed to make God love us, if His love to us was love while we were yet sinners, why should anything more be required than sincere repentance on the part of the sinner, and a free and lavish forgiveness on the part of God? We answer, that love to the culprit does not mean being reconciled to him. The father who sees his son committing sin continues to love that son, but cannot embrace him and be reconciled to him until sin be put away. So, while enemies to God through wicked works, we cannot be reconciled to God, who yet loves us. The enmity is, however, altogether on our side. On God's side it is just disapprobation, displeasure, and wrath against sin. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Fallen in sin, we deserved everlasting damnation; but God, in His infinite mercy, instead of allowing His just wrath to take its course, and consigning the whole human race to endless misery, God in mercy interposed to arrest of judgment. Not to do an unrighteous thing—that be far from God—or to gratify His love at the expense of His justice; but to open a way, through the wounds of His beloved Son, by which the wondrous property of divine love might flow to the rescue of beings who could not righteously be embraced so long as unexpiated guilt lay upon them. Hence the question we hear so often asked, "Why should not God pardon sin without atonement?" would not be raised if men did not thrust out of view the position of God as the righteous Governor and Judge of the universe. Now remember what Scripture says: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom." My whole moral nature rejects as simply impossible any forgiveness which ignores God's law, which obscures God's justice, and which enfeebles God's truth. Whatever Thine infinite love may prompt Thee to do, Thine infinite holiness and justice will so do that the whole universe will acknowledge that while punishing sin Thy love is never absent from Thy justice; in forgiving sin Thy justice is never absent from Thy love. Propitiation is needed for the sake of the unfallen, as is brought out well in one of the valuable series of "Present-Day Tracts," penned by Mr. Arthur. Were God, as universal Judge and Ruler, to permit the law to be violated with impunity, the law on which the peace and happiness of the universe depends, it would be setting a most dangerous example, and encouraging His creatures to rebel to their own ruin and His dishonour. If God were thus to overlook sin and say to His intelligent creatures, "Your love and your hate, your obedience and your disobedience, are nothing to me; it is no part of my

effect to punish or reward you; I abolish rewards and punishments throughout the whole of my dominions."—What a horrible thing that would be! Yet to this many would bring us. And I believe the opposition to the doctrine of the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ mainly rests on a secret, unavowed feeling that all punishment is cruel, whereas only unjust punishment is cruel. It is the part of the righteous Judge to punish wrongdoing for the sake of those who do right. If it were not for the fear of our own sins being punished, we should all feel that the abolition of punishment would be cruel and unjust.

But, if propitiation be needful, what is required in it? He who reconciles must be God and man. He must be human to give it application, and He must be divine to give infinite preciousness to the propitiation, and give power to exhaust the cup of wrath which it would take all creatures all eternity to drink. Where can you find such a one? Only in the infinite resources of God himself. The Eternal Son, God himself, took into union with Himself our nature, and so prepared Himself to bear the stroke of God's wrath. As the representative of man who deserved that extremest wrath, the God-man was able to concentrate it on Himself, and to sustain and exhaust it. Thus the righteousness of Jehovah's government was secured, wrath was exhausted, justice vindicated, and God, while just, was able to become the justifier of the ungodly that believe in Jesus Christ. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The only begotten Son of God took upon Him our flesh, born of a woman, born under the law, that the chastisement of our peace might be upon Him, and that with His stripes we might be healed. He came not merely as a great example, not merely to overcome Satan, but to be chastised, scourged, spit upon, and to die in our stead, to give His life a ransom for, or in the place of, many. Thus He vindicated the outraged law, satisfied the claims of divine justice, and made our peace at the price of such chastisement, that forgiveness may be extended to believing sinners, and those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb be welcomed to heaven by a satisfied and approving universe.

But more than this, in thinking of Him as the propitiation for sin, we must not lose sight of His eternal oneness with the Father. Once conceive of Christ as an altogether separate being from the Father, and my moral nature recoils from the idea of the Father inflicting upon Him the punishment of my transgression; and while my grateful heart may be drawn to the Son, it might be repelled from the Father. But let us remember the Lord Jesus Christ was not merely an innocent creature taking the place of the guilty; He was not even a distinct and separate Divine Being, subjected by another separate and distinct Being to the punishment of my transgression. He was essentially and eternally one with His Father, so that when the chastisement of our peace was laid on Him, it was not God laying the punishment on someone else, but God laying it on Himself. Thus, when we see the Eternal Father accepting the price of our redemption in the chastisement of His own Eternal Son, we may result and say, "No, Father, not at such a cost; not by the infliction of my punishment on Thine innocent Son can I accept this boon of forgiveness." But the Eternal Son draws near and says, "I and my Father are one." Thus, while carefully avoiding the old error of the early Church that the Trinity is a trinity of character and not of persons, or as one Being representing Himself in three relationships, we worship one God in Trinity, Trinity in Unity, let us hold fast the essential eternal oneness of the Son with the Father. Thus is every shadow of misgiving removed concerning the righteousness of the transaction, and our consciences may rest in peace on that wonderful transaction of Calvary where Christ "made (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

Now I enter not on the effect of propitiation on the heart and life of the sinner, but I say that the propitiation puts a new aspect on the astounding sinfulness of sin, which can only be pardoned through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Further, it is only by the death of Christ that man is reconciled—not merely that hindrances are removed in the way of God being reconciled to God, but that we are reconciled to God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." The enmity of man to God is far too deep, too bitterly inveterate, to be overcome by any display of divine love short of the death of the Son of God. The goodness of God—even the goodness that leads to repentance—will not break down the enmity. What will do it? Only the greatest of all goodness—the gift of His own Son to the death, even the death on the cross. God gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sin, and this wonderful propitiation should surely be the essence of all preaching. We want our ministry saturated with the old Gospel of Jesus Christ, for our ministry is valueless without the atonement: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." Let us, therefore, glory in this propitiation, equally effective to reconcile God to men and man to God. Only this propitiation will slay the enmity in my fallen, sinful heart, so that I may gladly enter into the holiest of all by the new and living way which Jesus Christ hath consecrated by His own blood.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER.

By the Rev. Talbot Greaves, M.A., Vicar of Clifton.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, on March 22.)

God says to unconverted men, "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness;" and to His own people He says, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness." Now, there are many who are far from righteousness, and who do not know what righteousness means. They are content if they stand well with their fellow-men, and are free from misdemeanours. But there is a vast difference between this morality and the righteousness the law requires. Paul speaks of sin reviving when the command came, that is, the sense of sin awakened by the demands of the law. So when God's voice speaks from

between us our soul two hostile remedies of our sense of righteousness; we discover nothing but a perfect righteousness will satisfy God; and if we invent no more, despair would be the inevitable result.

But, then, from the same word which discovers our lack we learn something more, even that righteousness has been provided. With the barbs that enter our soul comes the healing balm of Gilead. With Paul, we learn that what law and morality could not do, the righteousness which is by faith can do; and we find "Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

To this glorious truth I invite your attention for a few moments. God, in His Son, has wrought out a perfect righteousness for man. Jesus himself, His whole person and work, is the righteousness of the believer. Jehovah-Tsidkenu, the Lord our righteousness. What a blessed thought that the righteousness God requires God provides! The righteousness He requires we can never render; but God takes the place of the offender in order to bring the offender to stand in His place. God, in His Son, became that cursed thing which is sin, that man, believing in Him, may become that blessed thing which is the righteousness of God. So Paul teaches, "God hath made Him (that is, the Lord Jesus Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Mark that it is all comprehended in the old, old story of God's wonderful redemption—He for us and we in Him. Mark the twofold thought, substitution and union. He for us—substitution; we in Him—union. In His death He became our Substitute. In His resurrection He was our Head and Representative. He bore sin's penalty, which we never could exhaust; He perfectly fulfilled the law, bringing thereby a righteousness we could never establish. Here is the greatest wonder ever wrought on earth—a man of flesh and blood as you and I, made under the law, subject to the infirmities and temptations of the fallen family of man, yet without sin. I do not say merely without vice or crime, but without sin at all. So perfect was His harmony with the mind of God, His whole life was a perfect response to the mind of God and the law of God; that is the righteousness of Christ.

But observe, the righteousness, being that of "Immanuel, God with us," is infinitely perfect and supremely excellent. So it is called the righteousness of God, Jahovah our righteousness. Not the righteousness of unfallen Adam, which, while sinless, was but that of a creature; not the righteousness of the archangels—glorious, but only that of a creature; it is the righteousness of God, the righteousness of Him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Therefore is it perfect, and therefore may it claim, as a not too large reward, the full salvation of all who believe in Him. Thus you see how the righteousness of Christ rests upon the Godhead of Christ, the divinity of Christ. The righteousness of Immanuel, God with us, is of infinite value, which must exalt all who share it to a glory no archangel ever knew.

Now remember this righteousness of the God-man is incapable of addition. No man can add to it by personal obedience. No holiness or work of the regenerate man can contribute one iota to his acceptance before God. To the very last verge of eternity, the most advanced believer stands on the same level, as in acceptance before God, as the client stands who has just with the trembling hand of faith put on the robe of Christ's righteousness. Sanctification, the gradually, too, and course, is a different matter altogether. In regard to justification, all believers stand alike before God. Justification has definitely completed sin, on the ground of the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ. All who are united to Him become righteous as He is. There are no half measures; we are either in Christ, righteous as Christ is righteous, or we are out of Christ and unrighteous as Adam was in the day he fell.

Now this righteousness of Jesus, how is it bestowed on man? It is entirely the work of God. It is not something we bring to God, but something God brings to us. "It is God that justifieth." "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." The Lord imputes to the poor sinner the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in whom he trusts. It is the gift of God, who weaves the robe and clothes the sinner with it. And God's work is perfect, as it must always be. The man who is justified is perfectly justified; the law has no claim on him. The believer stands before God in Christ, and God sees in him no sin, only the perfect righteousness of His Son. And when at the last great day he stands before the bar, the eternal Judge looks not on him as he is himself, guilty and deserving death, but He looks on him as washed in Christ's blood and clothed in Christ's righteousness. On the ground of the perfect and complete atonement and righteousness of Christ, the sentence is pronounced, "Not guilty," all guilt having been expiated by the work and worthiness of the Lamb that was slain.

Then as to the medium through which the righteousness is received—it is faith. "The righteousness of God which is by faith." Not that there is any merit in faith. The reason faith is chosen as the medium of justification is simply that faith is the hand that appropriates Christ, the arm that embraces Christ. By faith Christ and the believing sinner are made one in the sight of God. You may have heard the truth stated in this way: "God looks on the sinner in Christ, and for the sake of Christ treats him as if he were righteous." But there is no "if" in the matter. It is not a legal fiction, it is a fact. By faith we are made one with Him; accounted one, because we are one; therefore there is no more condemnation for us than there is for Christ. We are righteous as He is righteous. So Jesus by faith, by simple trust, becomes the perfect, infinite, divine righteousness of the believer.

One word of caution ere I close. Take care you do not confound things that differ. Do not confound together justifying righteousness and personal holiness. The righteousness of Christ is your title to heaven, personal holiness is your meetness for it. He who confounds these two comes under the bondage of fear, or falls into the deep pitfall which Satan is preparing now in various forms of "perfectionism," which is a state of spiritual stagnation. Distinguish things that differ. Righteousness and holiness are extraordinarily jumbled up together greatly to our hurt. That which is important, divine, and precious truth when spoken

of justifying righteousness becomes grace, upon which spring all personal holiness. Both flow from God through Christ; but they are totally distinct. The one is the work Christ began and completed for us, the other is the work the Holy Spirit is now completing in us. Let us keep them distinct, and in seeking other holiness let us make it our aim to grow in grace. But all the time do not let us lose sight of the strange dark mystery, the abiding impossibility of nature that do yet remain even with those that are regenerated, so that the believer, in himself, cannot endure the severity of Divine justice. To the last, the soul's acceptance before God is only and wholly the righteousness of Christ. To the last, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." To the last, it is only if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, that we have fellowship with the Father, and His with us; and as we so walk, we are more and more cleansed of "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, which cleanseth from all sin;" and of the robe of righteousness so intense and perfect that the piercing eye of God himself can discover no flaw therein. As the godly McCheyne said, "Christ for us is our righteousness before a holy God; Christ in us is our strength in an unholy world."

THE INSPIRATION, AUTHORITY, AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

By the Rev. R. Brook, M.A., D.D., Chairman of the Congregational Union.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, on March 22.)

I have travelled to-day 200 miles, coming from the midst of pressing duties to speak in this Hall, and of London, and I should not have done so if I had not regarded these meetings as of very great importance to the Christian churches generally.

Now I am not here to defend or attack any person or section of the Christian Church. I am here simply to bear testimony to my strong faith in the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that portion assigned to me is testimony on behalf of the inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture. We can not carefully the literature of the present day without feeling painfully that there is setting in, in different quarters in the Christian churches, a tendency to depart more or less from simple and strong faith in Scripture, and from fundamental truth contained in God's Holy Word; and in our defence of Scripture, of orthodox and Evangelical truth, we must be prepared to meet with considerable obloquy, and to have many obnoxious epithets hurled at our heads. For example, a writer in the *Westminster Review* said a few years ago: "Those who are left as the exponents of popular faith are those so intellectually dull that they cannot master the logical effect of recent criticism, and are unable to realize the spirit of the age in which they live; or those whose moral susceptibilities are so blunt that they perceive no moral incongruity in the advocacy of opinions they do not hold in their ordinary and conventional sense."

In other words, we are either dolts or knaves, imbeciles in intellect, or immoral in character. If that be the spirit of the age, it is certainly neither the spirit of charity nor of truth.

We are not, however, ashamed to appear on behalf of Holy Scripture and Evangelical truths; and we venture to say there is not only a decay of degree in many quarters, but even a decay of faith, real living faith, not merely in doctrines, creeds, and confessions, but a diminution of strong simple faith in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and in every supernatural element in Holy Scripture.

The churches in different directions are shifting ground, and drifting away from the old moorings; and if ever Christianity be destroyed, which will never be, if ever it were so, it would be not by the thundering avalanches from cold mountains of Atheism, or by the assaults of the enemy without, but by the treachery of foes within our own household, negative theology, Atheism, and Agnosticism within our own borders. Hence, on behalf of Christian men, we seek to bear united testimony to Christian truth, and the fact that we represent different sections of the Church ought to give greater weight to our testimony; just as the evidence on behalf of the Bible becomes all the stronger because there are different books, written in different ages, by different minds, and by men of different social standing, yet all speaking the voice of God, and with the authority of the Almighty and Eternal Spirit.

Now, I claim against Agnostics and Rationalists that they do not treat the Bible with sufficient charity, reverence, and justice. They say they judge the Bible as an ordinary book. My complaint is that they do not treat the Bible as they would an ordinary book; they do not treat it with the same respect and justice and equity they extend to writers such as Shakespeare or Milton. Instead of coming to it to hear what it has to say, they come with a disposition, and sometimes a determination, to find flaws and faults in the sacred Book.

We regard it as a glorious temple of sacred truth, with many chambers and many solemn recesses; but these advocates of Agnosticism and unbelief come into this sacred temple not as a friend comes into a house or as a guest, but very much in the spirit of a sanitary inspector, peeping and poking about, sniffing here and there to discover some sort of bad odour, and rejoicing more over that one supposed flaw than over ninety and nine faultless chapters of which they cannot complain; because they think they have proved themselves extremely clever and ingenious.

Or, to change the figure, we come to this Scripture regarding it as a splendid, opulent, well laid out, and beautiful garden, with fine green plots, well watered by the living springs, the very walks of salvation, having the tree of life and many trees of knowledge, abounding in flowers of poetry and rhetoric, bearing all manner of precious fruit; but these people come into it, and instead of looking at and enjoying the beautiful and precious things, they pick up here and there a withered leaf or a rotten twig, and, fixing their whole attention on these, neither see nor feel the infinite beauty of the garden of sacred truth. It is too much with modern Sadducees as it was in the days of our Lord, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

I wish that people, before they attempt to attack or criticise, would simply read the Book for themselves, even if they did not believe in its inspiration and authority. They might at least accept it as a good Book, an old Book, a precious Book, and read it carefully and with sympathy, as they would other books. If so, they would soon discover by the testimony and spirit of the Book that it is no ordinary book, but a Book speaking to us from God the Maker, our Father, and Judge of all the earth. There is no other book in the world which is so fully its own evidence, its own most powerful advocate, if only carefully read and properly investigated.

As to the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, it would be perhaps unwise in me before a public and somewhat promiscuous audience to give a minute definition of what we understand by inspiration. I accept the definition of the Evangelical Alliance, and, without entering on any particular theory of inspiration, I say we do believe that the blessed Holy Scriptures are inspired, not in the ordinary common sense in which all good books are inspired by God. We believe it is more than that; we believe that Holy Scripture is specially supernaturally inspired so as to secure accuracy to its revelations of Christian truth communicated to the writers, and in consequence we believe we have in Scripture the Divine mind and will as in no other book. We believe the writers of the books of the Old and the New Testaments were under the special guidance and inspiration of God, so that these books reveal most clearly and most fully the Divine thoughts as found nowhere else.

It is quite true that in a certain sense we are now, if devout believers and praying Christians, more or less under the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit of God. It is no vain prayer we offer when we sing as we do in one of the hymns on the paper provided for these services:

"Come, and with flames of zeal and love
Our hearts and tongues inspire."

We mean what we say, and that because

"The things of Christ the Spirit takes,
And to our heart reveals;
Our bodies He His temple makes,
And our redemption seals."

That is, we believe, our hearts and our bodies are the objects and the subjects of the work of the Divine Spirit. In the general sense, no doubt, the Church of Christ, ministers and members, are inspired, and are led and used by the Spirit of God. At the same time we hold firmly that the inspiration of Moses, Isaiah, David, St. Paul, and other writers of the books of Scripture, was an inspiration of a special and supernatural character, and much higher, deeper, and broader than that of the present day. Most thoroughly do I hold with the sentiments recently expressed by Canon Farrar: "After all these millenniums it (the Bible) remains the most unique, glorious Book in all the world."

Now, I have more than once observed in articles written, and in speeches made in public assemblies, a disposition shown to sacrifice the Old Testament to save the New. It seems to me a most ridiculous notion. You might as well suppose that Sebastopol would have been better defended had the Russians given up the Redan and Inkermann, and contented themselves with one part of the line of defence. I do not wish to introduce controversial matter, but I maintain that if you do not hold the Old Testament as well as the New, you are certainly on the "down grade," for he who gives up the Old Testament will ere long give up the New Testament. Then I agree with Justice Stephen, who, in replying to Mr. Mivart, the Roman Catholic, said, "If you give up the Old Testament to please the critics, you will soon have to give up the New Testament to please the historical critics." But, in fact, while holding the New Testament, we must accept the Old, for the testimony of the New to the Old is unchallengeable. Think of all those beautiful passages, quoted, preached from, believed: "It is written;" "Search the Scriptures;" "The Scripture cannot be broken;" "The Scripture must be fulfilled;" all these have reference to the Old Testament in the New. And what about such glowing expressions as "Thy Word is sweeter than honey;" "The Word of the Lord is sure;" "A lamp to my feet and a light to my path;" "More precious than silver"? All these refer to the Old Testament. Yes, lately I have been preaching largely from the Old Testament, and I have been greatly struck with the beauty, glory, brightness, excellence, and hope which characterise the Old Testament. Where in modern hymnology, beautiful as much of it is, do you find anything like the old Hebrew Psalter? Where can you find anything to equal the Twenty-third Psalm? Where will you find such promises for the sick chamber, the dying bed, the anxious inquiring soul, as in the Old Testament? Take these away, and what have you for the sorrowful, the inquirer, or the dying sinner or saint? Do not, then, listen to those who would rob us of the foundation of Holy Scripture. It would be impossible to understand the New if we did not believe the Old Testament, because the substance of the New is found in the Old, and because a beautiful unity and harmony runs through the whole, from Genesis to Revelation.

Now, with regard to the authority of Holy Scripture, if it be inspired, if, as we believe, the writers were under the direction and control of the Spirit of Truth in a special and supernatural manner, then its authority is easy to understand, for there must be in connexion with such an inspired Book more authority than in any other book. I heard a story the other day about two children who were contending as to the truthfulness or untruthfulness of a certain thing. The controversy went on in the familiar way: "It is" and "It isn't." At last one settled it thus: "My mother says 'It is;' and when mother says it is, it is, if it isn't." Now we do not say, "If the Bible says a thing is, it is, *if it isn't*." That would be irrational; but "What the Bible says, when properly interpreted, must be true." Now, accepting this Book as inspired of God, as the voice of God to us, we feel it speaks with authority, and we believe everything it says, and seek to do what it commands. We believe everything that is stated is true, and what is true will be in accordance with reason, when reason is properly enlightened. Therefore we consent to the authority of the Scripture, and accept its commands as binding on conscience and reason. It is our final authority. Therefore we do not like to hear the Bible spoken of as a mere collection of tracts, a conglomeration of Hebrew literature. True, there are many books in it, but

there runs throughout the whole a unity which gives it a character such as no other book possesses. It is not a fortuitous concourse of atoms, nor an accidental conglomeration, but it is the revealed Word of God, and as such it comes with weight and authority. If not, what other authority have we to go to? Some are quite resolved to let the Book go if they have an infallible Church. Well, I do not suppose we on this platform, belonging to various denominations, would put forward any of our churches as absolutely infallible. But, apart from this Book, where is the authority for salvation from sin, for hope concerning the future life, except from the Word of God? We are referred to our own reason, but that, as we know, is frequently at fault. Is there no other guide?

We are referred to the "spirit of the age." I should like to know where to catch this "will-o'-the-wisp." What is the spirit of the age? Where is it to be found? On this platform? In the pulpit or press? In certain publications in Paternoster Row, or on the eloquent lips of Canon Liddon in St. Paul's? Shall we go to Queen Victoria Street, where that blessed society sends out the Bible in so many languages? Where is it? In certain newspaper offices in Ludgate Hill or Fleet Street? If there, why not proceed on far as Exeter Hall, where the Y.M.C.A. have their head-quarters, and other noble societies may be heard? Where is this spirit of the age, which is to be accepted as an infallible authority? I have great respect for the age. I consider it to be the best age we have yet seen in the Church or in the world. But it is not absolute authority, for it speaks with no harmonious voice. We must not trust the age, or the spirit of the age. The spirit of the age is little better than "the fashion of the world which passeth away." It is a foundation of sand, and we must build on something more stable—even the truth of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and especially the living eternal Word Himself, who became incarnate, and dwelt among men, and died on the cross for our sin.

Lastly, in addition to the inspiration and authority of Holy Writ, we believe also in its sufficiency. Here we have all that is essential and necessary to our salvation. We do not require tradition, or the infallible declaration of any church. We have sufficient guidance on all truths of salvation in Holy Scripture.

Now, holding most tenaciously these three things—the inspiration, the authority, and the sufficiency of Holy Scripture—we are prepared to advocate its world-wide circulation and declamation by the Christian Church.

If you wish an example of the result of abandoning Holy Scripture, you have but to look at the life of that celebrated, and justly celebrated, man of science, Darwin. Looking into his life, we find him confessing, "The more exalted feelings either under the influence of Agnosticism; in youth the poetry of Milton, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley gave me great pleasure; pictures, also, greatly delighted me. Now I cannot endure to read a line of poetry, and Shakespeare is intolerably dull, and nauseates me. I also lost my taste for pictures and music. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

Thus the giving up of the supernatural takes away the higher feelings—love of music and poetry, and other noble tastes—and eventually proves injurious to our moral nature. That is a terrible thing to contemplate. Now I would close with urging and asking you, who owe so much to the Bible, to hold fast by that Word, to read it daily and pray over it, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, embody it in your lives, get the Book into your heart and life. Let there be no contradiction between your life and this blessed Book.

A CLOSING WORD.

By the Rev. G. Stringer Rowe, Wesleyan Minister, London.

(Address delivered at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, on March 22.)

I had designed to speak on "The Holy Ghost, the Author and Sustainer of Spiritual Life," but in the course of a conversation with the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, Mr. A. J. Arnold, he mentioned that as I spoke at the close of an important series of meetings for united testimony on the fundamental truths of the Gospel, it would be well I should endeavour to gather up, as it were, the threads of the valuable addresses which have been delivered. Some may ask, now that these meetings have been held, What good has come of them? I reply: They have furnished a demonstration of the unity of Christians in all the great central truths of their faith, showing that the Lord's disciples are one, notwithstanding freedom of difference in minor particulars. The unity, indeed, is the more impressively manifested when it is seen to be unhindered by these differences.

It has been amply proved that there are those who still continue to teach and uphold the foundation truths of the Gospel without abatement or concealment, and without concession to the shifting fashions of surrounding thought and opinion. And that these truths are sacredly precious to multitudes has been witnessed by the thousands who have taken part in the meetings which are now drawing to a close.

The position which has been taken is one of firm and confident protest against the doctrine that the faith of God's holy religion in Christ Jesus must be expected to undergo change in the course of years, or that it is now in process of a development dependent upon varying circumstances of man's life, or advances in man's philosophic or scientific knowledge.

The Gospel, in the very nature of it, as a Gospel of God, could not have been flung, in a germinal or rudimentary form, into the midst of human thought and habit, pride and passion, to take its chance of development. What system of faith might at last emerge from such a medley of influences presents, doubtless, a very interesting subject of conjecture, with such light as is thrown upon it by religious systems which have grown up under these conditions. But we have maintained, and still hold, that God's revelation of man's deliverance from sin, and restoration to Himself, came into the world in Christ Jesus complete and unalterable; and we repeat that,

in the very nature of it, the Gospel, to be a Gospel at all, could have come in no other way.

We affirm that there is abundant evidence to show that the doctrines of the Gospel were received in the beginning as we hold them to-day, and that the reception of them was followed by probably the same results. So also we have now the daily accumulating evidence that, amidst the utmost diversities of clime, and peculiarities of race, language, habits, and environment, the Gospel, without being least modified or adapted, is everywhere "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The Reformation did not, as some like to affirm, develop or discover the doctrine of justification by faith. The Reformation recovered it, and rescued it from the entombment in which it had lain hidden for ages, buried under the superstitions and vain traditions of men. No; wherever the Gospel has been subjected to the influences of development—and, unfortunately, examples are by no means lacking—the result has, without exception, been a progress towards its destruction.

We may profitably look again, for a moment, at the very central doctrine of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, around which all other elements of the Gospel cluster, so that, if this be taken away, you have not merely altered an important feature of the Gospel, you have actually disintegrated and destroyed it.

Searching, now, the Gospel revelation to learn what this atonement is, we find it set forth that the Son of God, being made man, did, as such, fulfil all righteousness, and, bearing the sins of the mankind of which He formed a part, suffered death on their behalf, and in their stead, thereby offering a redeeming and atoning sacrifice, and becoming "a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world;" whereby God, who gave the sacrifice, made it possible for Him to "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

There are those who tell us, and sometimes in language which seems to us terribly profane, that they are shocked and repelled by this doctrine. We have not, in these testimonies of ours, been trying to make apology for the doctrine. Our position is, that you cannot have this Gospel without it. God's foundation-stone must be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to all who refuse to build upon it. There is no vainer or more ill-judged attempt possible than that which tries to make it otherwise. The doctrine of the sacrificial atonement by the blood of Christ is the very web of the whole texture of Evangelical truth.

I know not where to find such fatally misused ingenuity as you may sometimes see spent upon the obstinate attempt to compel the plain words of the New Testament Scriptures on this point to bear a meaning wholly different from their manifest sense. Consider the fact that the Gospel was first taught to Jews. To their minds, such terms as atonement, propitiation, blood of atonement, sacrifice, passover, the lamb slain, could convey only one meaning, that of a substitutionary offering by death for sin. As they heard the words, no alternative meaning could possibly suggest itself to them. Those, then, who think it necessary to explain away a great difficulty from the Gospel teaching find themselves confronted by a far greater. They must vindicate those who communicated the Gospel revelation, and the Son of God himself, against the charge of having used language that of necessity conveyed a meaning widely different from that which they intended.

When St. Jude wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints," can it be imagined that he had in his mind the possibility of that faith needing to be modified as the fashion of men's thought changed? "Once delivered to the saints"—what words could be stronger or more clear in describing an imperial standard of truth set up once for all and unalterable, to which men should come back in all years afterwards, to test and adjust their own measurements of truth.

These meetings of ours have been a gathering of the tribes around the original and unchangeable standard of the truth. We have joined together to protest against any tampering with it, believing that there is much in the present time which peculiarly calls for such protest. And we have solemnly and joyfully pledged ourselves to abide faithful, by the grace of God, to the Word of God.

And now, as this demonstration of united "testimony to the cardinal truths of the Gospel" comes to an end, the question presses upon us, How can we best continue its influence, and go on to secure the great end it has had in view? We cannot be always or frequently demonstrating after this fashion. Neither, if it were possible, would it be a thing to be desired.

But that which we have now been doing centrally, cannot we do in many ways locally? Have not these meetings deepened the conviction in our minds that, upon a common ground of faith, there should be shown forth a loving community of brotherhood? Shall we not, giving free exercise to the instinct of our common life, use all opportunities of proving that we are one in Christ, with a unity which does not depend upon uniformity of church system, or any one creed in lesser matters—a unity which no such system or creed is permitted to hinder in its frank, full, and thankful recognition of "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity"? Let the world have no just occasion to say that our practice contradicts our profession, and that we suffer subordinate things to neutralise the uniting force of the faith in which we declare that we are all one, not alone by community of opinion, but by oneness of life and love.

Not only official teachers, but every believer, in his own place and calling, is set for the defence of the Gospel. Let each of us faithfully protest against the strange popular infatuation, that because a man is clever, learned, and brilliant, that therefore his infidelity to the Gospel is to be condoned; that any man's genius confers upon him a license to trifle with the truth of God. Let us jealously shut out from our homes all religious literature which avowedly opposes itself to the teaching of the Word of God. There is no more narrowness and bigotry in this policy than there is in the caution which you use to keep poisonous adulterations from the food provided for your home table.

Above all, and in order that our testimony to

the truth may be clearly and effectually, we must let their work have full possession of our own minds. The very words our own mouth must be suppressed and overpowered. They who can offer their own personal knowledge and experience in evidence, while their testimony is enhanced by the abundance of the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, are rendering the best of all service to the maintenance of the truth; and it is a service to fully within the reach of the least and the feblest as of the most gifted.

Against such testimony, faithfully upheld, however weak in itself the hand that upholds it, the powers of darkness hurl themselves in vain.

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL.

THE monthly meeting of Council was held on Thursday, April 17; Edward Bailey, Esq., presiding. The Chairman read a passage of Scripture, and prayer was offered by the Rev. W. Fuller Gooch.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following persons were unanimously elected to membership:—

R. C. G. Thomas, Esq., Ramsgate.
Mrs. Leigh Lye, Ramsgate.
Miss J. M. G. Scott, Ramsgate.
Miss E. A. Stubbs, London.
J. Hunt, Esq., Canterbury.
Mrs. Hunt, Canterbury.
L. J. McCormick, Esq., Chicago.
Miss S. Maloney, Canterbury.
Surgeon-General White, London.
Rev. R. A. Sneath, Hackney.
Rev. D. R. Hamilton, Hackney.
Miss E. E. Harper, Clifton.
Mrs. H. Brown, Clifton.
W. G. Mott, Esq., Clifton.
Mrs. Woodhouse, Eastbourne.
R. Haigh, Esq., Eastbourne.
R. Cruickshank, Esq., Eastbourne.
Miss Bailey, Eastbourne.
Miss [illegible] Bailey, Eastbourne.
Miss Osborne, Eastbourne.
Miss M. E. Engelbach, Eastbourne.
Rev. G. Fielden, Clifton.
Rev. W. J. Morgan, Bristol.
J. Saunders, Esq., Cambridge.
Major W. Campbell, Poona.
Mrs. Campbell, Poona.
Rev. J. Henderson, M.A., Poona.
Rev. D. O. Fox, Poona.
Mrs. Fox, Poona.
J. H. Jones, Esq., Poona.
A. H. Bryson, Esq., Poona.
Captain C. J. G. Lewis, Poona.
Mrs. Lewis, Poona.
Mrs Galloway, Manchester.
Miss C. S. Hassell, London.
Mrs. Moore, Hanley.
Rev. H. Jackson, Hanley.
Rev. W. Lawton, Hanley.
Rev. W. Yeomans, Hanley.
Mrs. Yeomans, Hanley.
Rev. W. Lewis Jones, Shelton.
Rev. J. Bateman, Hanley.
Rev. R. S. Chambers, Hanley.
Ald. G. Ridgway, Hanley.
Chas. Meller, Esq., Hanley.
T. W. Hartland, Esq., Hanley.
Mrs. Worthington, Hanley.
Mrs. Hall, Shelton.
Rev. J. Cuthbert Hattersley, Hanley.
Rev. Jno. Pitchford, Hanley.

General Field and Mr. Arnold reported that they had visited Ramsgate, and Canterbury, and Hanley respectively, where meetings had been held on behalf of the Alliance.

MONTHLY SPECIAL MEETINGS.

The Secretaries reported on the recent meetings for testimony in regard to fundamental truth that, notwithstanding the inclement weather which prevailed on almost every day of the meetings, the attendance had been large, especially at Exeter Hall and Mildmay Conference Hall. The spirit of the meetings was all that could be desired, and it was generally felt that much good must result. The Special Committee had held a final meeting, at which they had received a full report, and the minutes of their meeting were submitted to the Council.

The Secretaries also stated that the special fund needed for the expenses had been raised by private appeals to members and friends of the Alliance, the total contributions amounting to over £250, and the collections at the various meetings to £82, bringing the receipts up to over £330. The accounts had not yet been closed, but the expenditure had been about £300, so that there would probably be a small balance remaining.

MAY CONVERSAZIONE.

In reference to the May Conversazione, it was reported by the Secretary that Dr. Angus had again kindly consented for the meeting to be held at Regent's Park College, and Tuesday, May 15, was fixed as the date. It was reported that, amongst the foreign brethren who were expected to be present and speak at the Conversazione, were the Rev. Dr. Schaff, of New York; Rev. J. Jameson, of Madrid; Rev. J. Jones, of Mané; and Signor Turino, of Genoa.

PLYMOUTH CONFERENCE.

The Secretary reported that the Plymouth Committee had agreed to the date suggested by this Council for the Annual Conference, viz., Sept. 25, 26, and 27.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

On the subject of religious liberty, correspondence was submitted from Mr. Jos. Jones, of Portugal, and Mr. Leite Bains, of London, with reference to the case of Mr. Maxwell Wright, of Santa Cruz. It was stated that the appeal of Mr. Wright against

his conviction upon the charge of disrespect to the Roman Catholic religion had been disallowed, and his trial on the original charge was ordered to take place at Madrid. The draft of a letter to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs upon this subject was submitted by the Secretaries, and adopted.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.

A communication was read from the Committee of the German Branch of the Alliance calling attention to the arrangements made at Geneva, in 1886, for another meeting of the International Committee to be held, in 1888, at the German capital. The Berlin Committee were, therefore, convening a meeting of the representatives of the various Branches of the Alliance for the month of September this year; and they earnestly invited the British Branch to send delegates.

The Council accepted the invitation, and hope to be represented on the occasion.

[illegible] SUMMARY OF [illegible].

Communications were read from the General Committee, enclosing a document from the head of the Holy Synod of the Greek Church in reply to the memorial of the Evangelical Alliance kindly presented to the Czar of Russia.

QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

The subject for the next Quarterly Conference, to be held on Friday, April 27, was agreed upon as follows: "The Believer's Call to Watchfulness." The Rev. W. Roberts, B.A., of Notting Hill, had consented to give the opening address.

IRISH BRANCH.

At a meeting of the Council of the Irish Branch, held in Dublin, on March 27, the Secretary reported that the annual meeting had been held on Monday evening, March 12, Major Warren presiding. The report was read by the Secretary, the Rev. D. Mullan, which contained an interesting summary of the operations of the Irish Branch during the past year. The financial statement showed a small adverse balance on the transactions of the year. The Council and office-bearers were re-elected for the ensuing year, with the addition of the names of the Rev. Canon Evans, Cork; J. C. Newman, Esq., Cork; the Rev. Preston Ball, A.M., Dublin; and John Nagy, Esq., J.P., Gilnahirk. Sir William Ewart, Bart., M.P., and Sir James P. Corry, Bart., M.P., were unanimously elected Vice-Presidents of the Irish Branch. Among those taking part in the proceedings were the Rev. G. H. H. Wright, D.D., the Rev. Henry Evans, D.D., and the Rev. Thomas A. McKee, D.D. Apologies for absence were read from the Rev. Samuel Prentes, R. F. Rambaut, and others.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM MARCH 21 TO APRIL 18, 1888.

	£	s.	d.
Rev. V. J. Stanton	1	0	0
Mrs. Walker	1	1	0
Rev. R. F. [illegible]	0	5	0
Mrs. Henderson	0	10	0
The Misses Perkins	0	5	0
Cheltenham Subscriptions, per Miss Pulsford	2	0	0
Rev. R. D. Thomas	0	5	0
Miss Wilmot	0	5	0
General & Mrs. Boyd	0	5	0
Rev. C. H. Waller	1	1	0
Alfred Pugh, Esq., & Mrs.	1	1	0
Oxford Subscriptions, per Mr. G. Babcock	1	10	0
Mrs. Jenny	1	1	0
Walter Freeman	1	1	0
Mrs. Freeman	0	10	0
J. B. Brown, Esq.	0	10	0
John B. Cobb	1	0	0
Rev. Dr. Worgan	0	10	0
Mrs. Nettleship	0	5	0
J. Bunce, Esq.	0	1	0
Mrs. & Miss Moore	0	1	0
Mrs. Maxwell	0	10	0
Mrs. Brightwen	1	0	0
Walter Jones, M.D.	1	1	0
Mrs. Stirling	0	10	0
Captain E. E. Kenyon, R.E.	1	0	0
D. Henry Fry, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. H. G. Munro	1	1	0
Miss Lowry	0	10	0
Mrs. Cumberlege	0	5	0
R. Hunter Grant, Esq. (2 years)	2	2	0
General Stevens	1	0	0
Mrs. Stevens	1	0	0
Captain Clay	0	5	0
Mrs. Hindle	1	1	0
Colonel Bonhardson	1	1	0
Colonel Cole, Esq., and Mrs.	0	10	0
Mrs. and Miss Reynolds	0	7	6
Mrs. Galloway	1	1	0
Miss E. Collins	1	0	0
George Rathbone, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. R. G. Adam	0	5	0
C. E. Newton, Esq., J.P., and Mrs.	1	1	0
Miss Norton	0	5	0
Miss Sewell	0	5	0
Mrs. Varley	1	1	0
C. R. Hurlbatt, Esq.	0	5	0
Rev. T. H. Jackson	1	0	0
Miss Frampton	1	0	0
Rev. R. M. Harwood	0	10	0
John Brown, Esq.	1	1	0
Mrs. Alfred Lord	1	1	0
Rev. H. R. Hankin	0	10	0
Some under £1	1	1	6
PER CONTINENT.			
J. R. Vanger, Esq.	1	1	0
Messrs. J. Duncan & Co.	1	1	0
J. R. Bedwell, Esq.	0	10	0
Mrs. Bailey	0	5	0
Mrs. Dunlop	1	1	0
W. Miller, Esq.	1	10	0
Mrs. Cosens	0	5	0
Mr. Lewis Bennett	1	1	0
J. Cobb, Esq.	1	1	0
Mr. Walter Bedwell	1	1	0
Rev. W. A. Mills	0	10	0
Public Collections, Esq.	1	1	0
A. K. Cuthbertson, Esq., and Mrs.	0	10	0
Mrs. Johnson	0	10	0
R. Pywell, Esq.	0	10	0
[illegible]			
Lord Kinnaird	1	0	0
Colonel and R. Shands, R.A.	0	10	0
Rev. W. [illegible]	0	10	0
Mr. John Cowan, R.N.R.	1	1	0
Lady Hope	0	5	0
Edward Phillips, Esq.	0	5	0
Rev. H. H. Bailey	1	1	0
Colonel Bonhardson	1	1	0
W. H. Orme, Esq.	1	1	0
The Misses Cowan	0	5	0
[illegible]			
Proceeds of Concert at S.P.			
Meetings in Albion, per Mr.			
Expenses	1	17	0

Alliance House, 7 Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C.

*** Remittances may be made payable to the order of either of the Secretaries (Lieut.-General Field, C.B., and Mr. A. J. Arnold), or to the Treasurer.